Commentary

Volume Fifty-six, Number Three, September 1973

The New Egalitarianism & the Old
CHARLES FRANKEL

The Conversion of the Jews
MARSHALL SKLARE

Moral Education and the Schools
DIANE RAVITCH

A Dissent on Pynchon
DAVID THORBURN

Mumford in Retrospect
PETER SHAW

Politics on Film
WILLIAM S. PECHTER

AN APPOINTMENT WITH WATERGATE
SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET & EARL RAAB

Books in Review:
Elliott Abrams/Emmie Donadio/David Bromwich/
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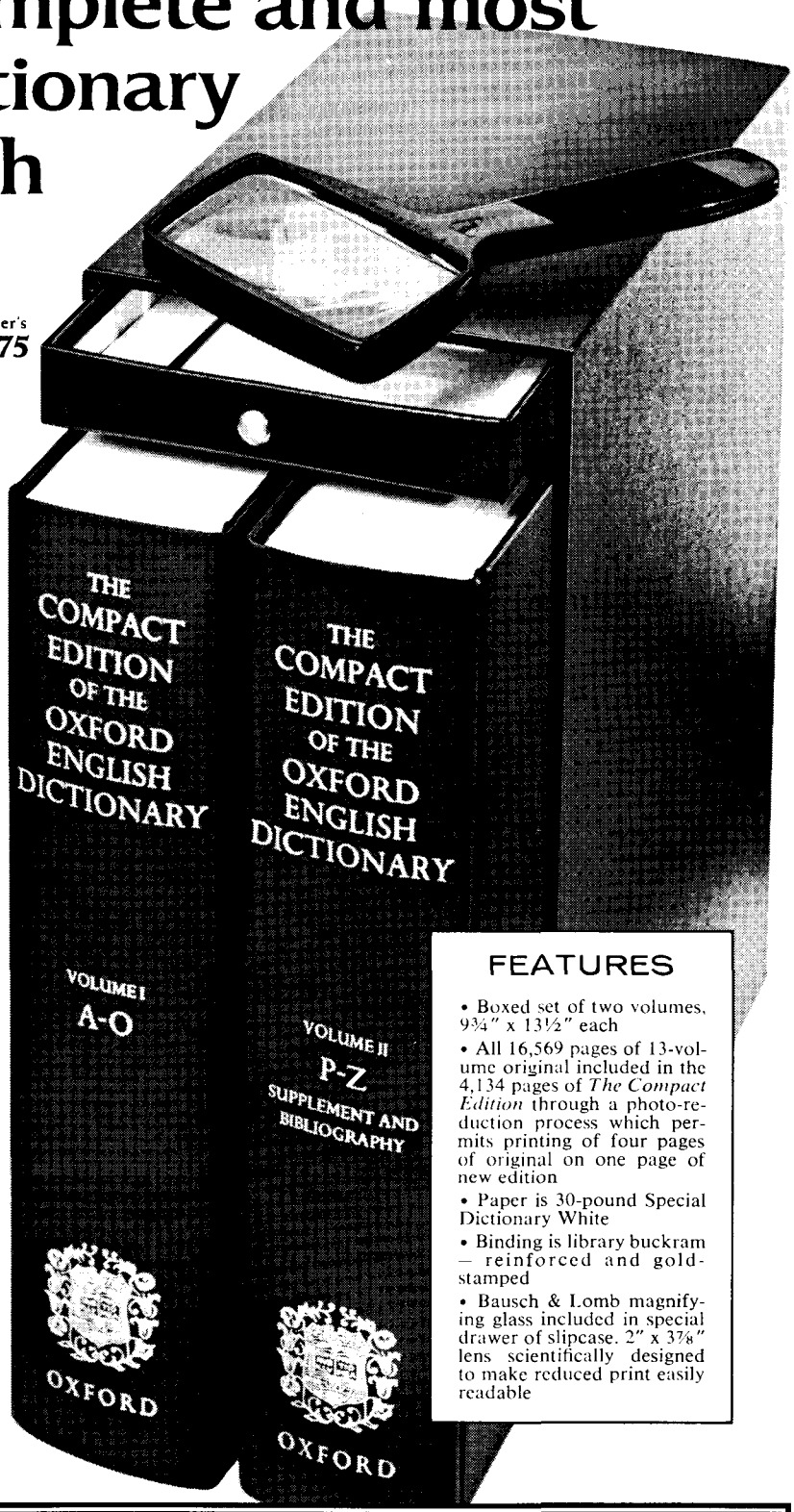
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Commentary

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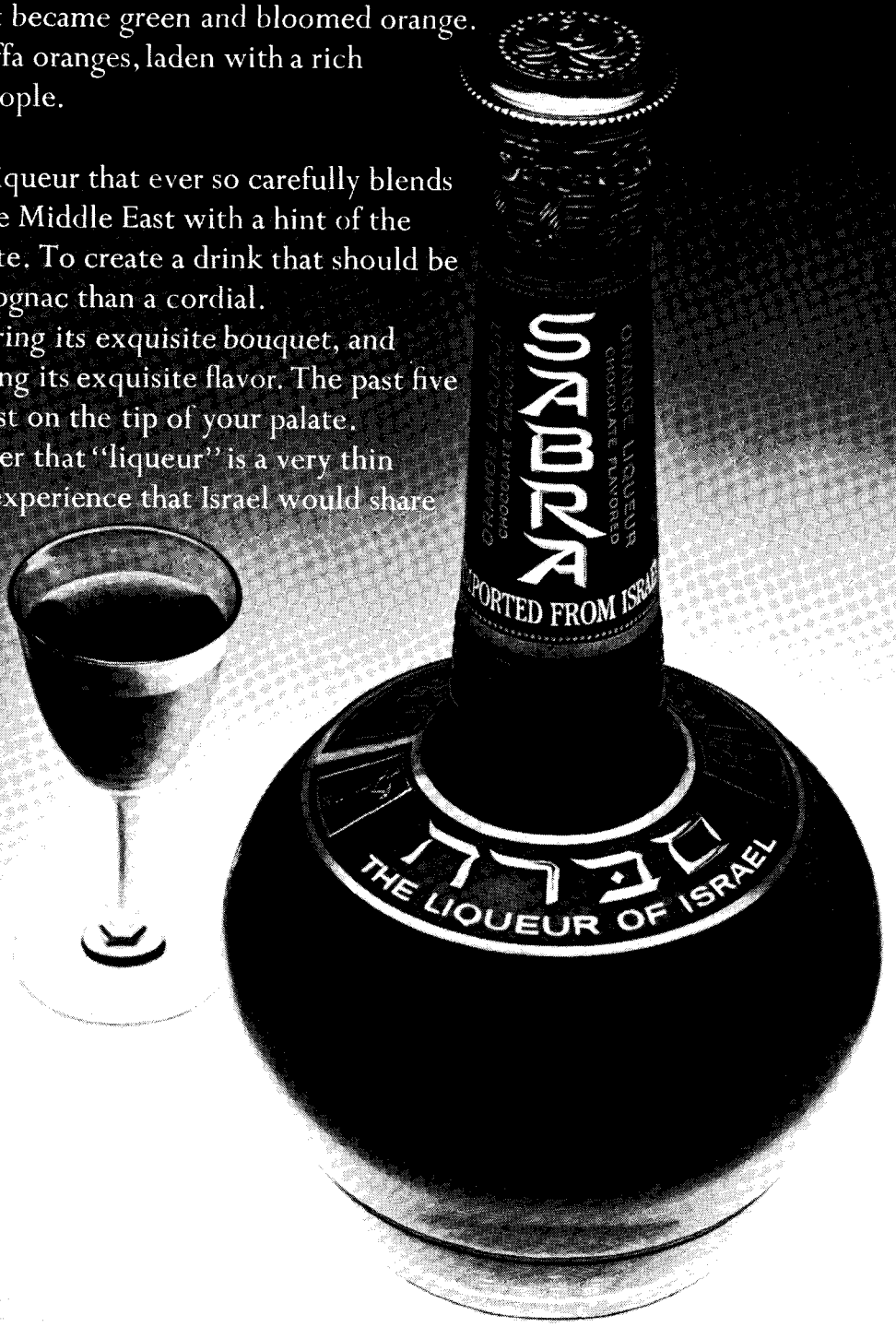

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Letters from Readers

Looking at China

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Let me say at the outset that although Sheila K. Johnson was critical of me in her article, "To China, With Love" [June], I strongly sympathize with the general drift of her article. I only too well remember the succession of clever fools who deceived us about Russia. As a newspaperman, I cannot to this day recall Walter Duranty, with his Pulitzer Prize, his great prestige, and his almost total misrepresentation of what was happening in the Soviet Union, without bitter indignation. Yet he misinformed the world much less badly than other visitors to the Soviet Union like Sidney and Beatrice Webb. When I went to China this winter, I had all this in mind. I believe with Mrs. Johnson that it will be most dangerous if the same kind of foolishness is manifested again, but this time in connection with China; and I think that there are some signs, especially on the academic Left, that just this is happening.

In my own case, however, I feel that Mrs. Johnson has been unjust. She apparently regards countries as large, unchanging entities, toward which one must always have a constant view. This is of course historical nonsense. The China of today, for example, obviously differs greatly from the China of the years of the Great Leap, or indeed the years of the Cultural Revolution—the two periods when I wrote my most critical reports on Chinese developments.

I recently reread the most severe of all my earlier articles about China, written for the *China Quarterly* in 1959 during the time of the Great Leap. To be honest without being over-modest, I was surprised by my own accuracy. I spoke of the clear possibility that the government might be brought down by the catastrophe that the Great Leap had produced in the Chinese countryside. At the time of writing, I did not know of the indisputably authentic Tibetan Documents (as this collection of Chinese military papers smuggled out of Tibet is called in the intelligence community). These Tibetan documents show that the misery in the countryside resulting from the Great Leap came desperately close to producing an army mutiny—just the sort of thing I thought possible—primarily because the People's Liberation Army is a peasant army, and the peasants were the main sufferers from the Great Leap. I have no doubt that it was because of the threat of army mutiny that the policies of the Great Leap were so hastily junked. To this day, moreover, the Chinese people openly speak of the time of the Great Leap as "the three bad years."

As to what I wrote about China when I went there this last winter, I do not think it was either favorable or unfavorable, except that it was mainly favorable to the Chinese people themselves, whom I have always loved and admired, and to certain individuals whom I encountered and also admired, like Prime Minister Chou En-lai. I have no settled opinion of what may be called the moral aspect of the Chinese regime. The morality of a government, *so long as it is not for export,* seems to me to concern only the people being governed, except in one very special kind of case. This is when the government in question is a giant power, and therefore always *threatens* to export its methods, even if it is not actually doing so, and when it is also committing crimes of a truly monstrous nature. Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia have been the two examples of this kind of special case in my working lifetime. In all of history, there have not been a great many others. Maybe, too, China will later become still another example of this kind of monstrous and menacing giant power. But I do not think that China today is to be equated with either Hitlerian Germany or the Soviet Union—at any rate if judged from the standpoint of the United States.

The new China seemed interesting to me for two reasons—because the strange workings of the world balance of power have made China into a quasi-ally of this country (with considerable advantage to us, as I believe); and because the new China, if successful, will inescapably have an enormous weight in the world. Hence these were the only two subjects I wished to investigate.

My first object was to determine, insofar as one can ever determine such things, the worth of China as a quasi-ally. On this point, I was

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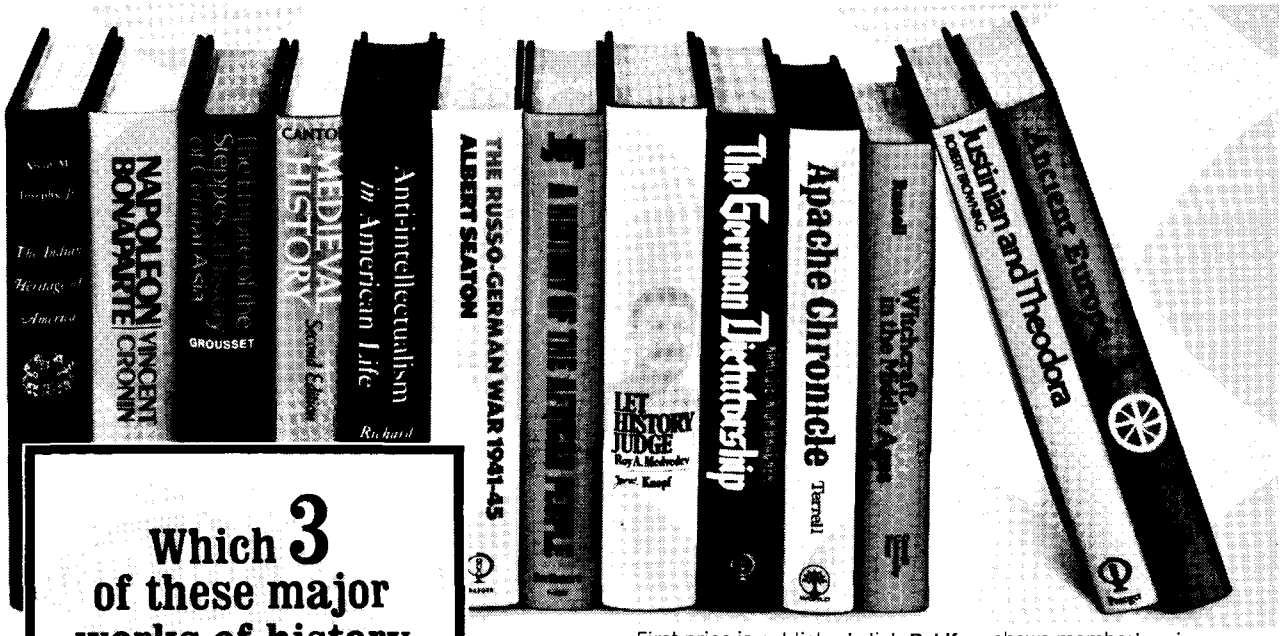

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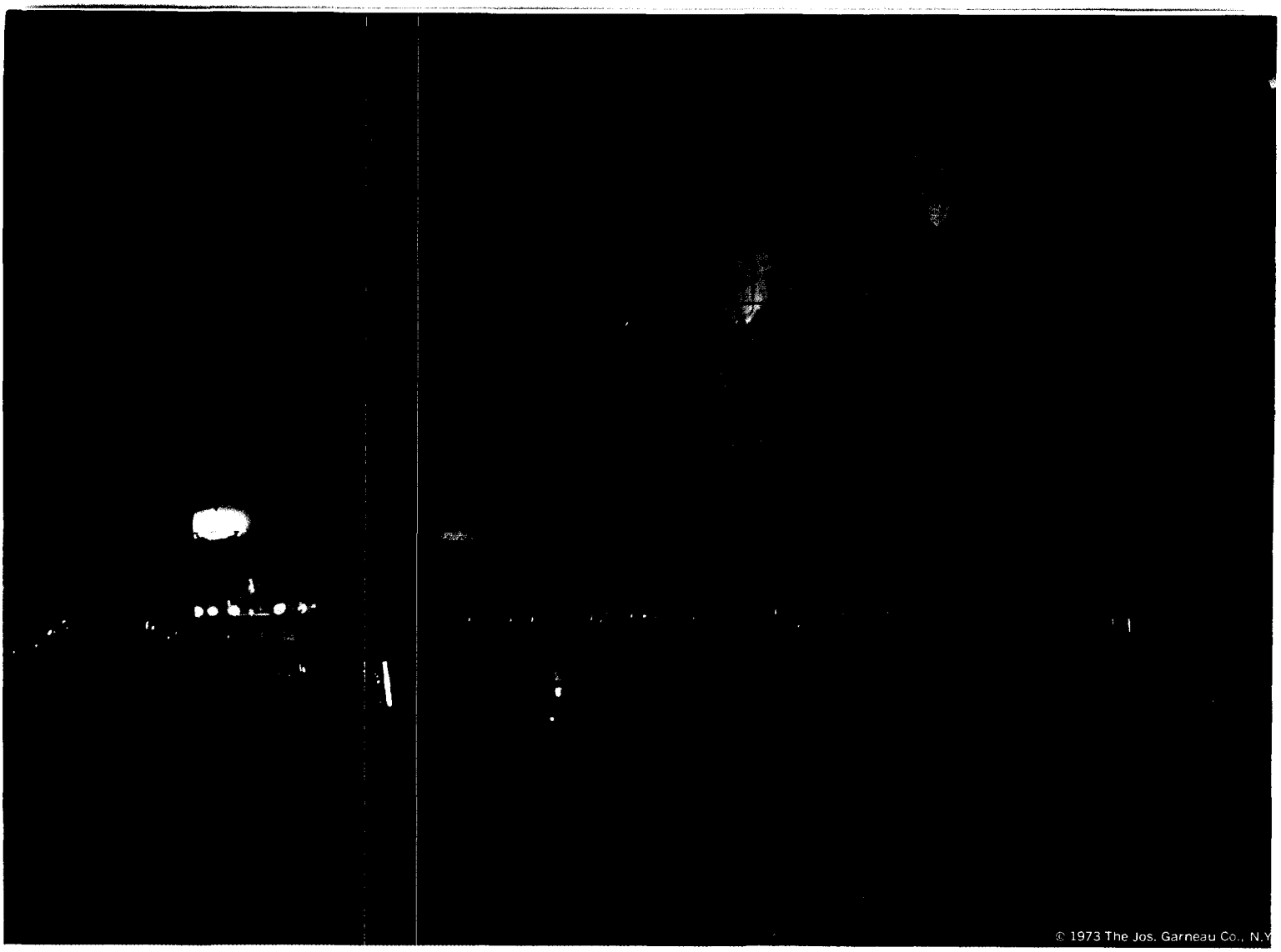

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How the war was lost but the wine was won

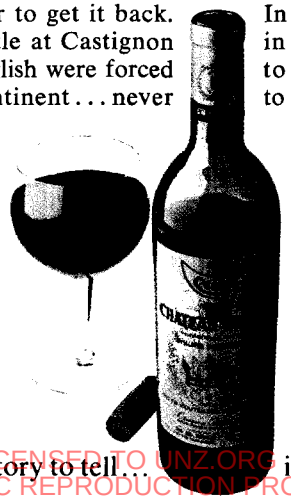
Long, long ago, when knights were bold and kingdoms were personal property, a 15-year-old girl named Eleanor was married to Louis VII, King of France. What she lacked in maturity she made up in her dowry. She was heiress to Aquitaine, an area equal to almost one-quarter of modern France. But even that didn't help, and the marriage was dissolved by the Pope in 1152.

Because she retained her property, Eleanor was very popular and she soon accepted the proposal of Henri Plantaganet, Duke of Anjou. Being a Plantaganet and a descendant of William the Conqueror, it came to pass that Henri became Henry II, King of England.

So, Eleanor, who had been Queen of France at 15, found herself Queen of England at 30. This marriage was successful to the tune of ten children, two of whom became kings. One was Richard the Lion Hearted, of Crusader fame. The other was King John and his best claim to fame was that he was forced to sign the Magna Carta.

Meanwhile, the proud French resented having so large a part of their country being held as personal property of a Queen of England. Especially since Eleanor's lands included the thriving seaport of Bordeaux and all the Bordeaux wine region as well.

Finally, after mulling it over for 100 years, the French started the Hundred Years War to get it back. In a last great battle at Castignon in 1453, the English were forced to leave the Continent . . . never to return.



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reassured by the resoluteness, tough-mindedness, and clear view of world realities that I found among the Chinese leaders. In this respect, being in China was like being in Israel. In other words, I found myself thinking how useful it would be if we could swap some of their leaders for a good many of our own.

As to the larger question about China's success, I saw what looked to me like signs that great future success was highly possible. This more complex impression of mine did not involve any substantial change of mind about the convulsions of the past. What seemed important to me was not to pass judgment on what had happened. It seemed important, rather, to make a rough but relatively reliable estimate of what was currently happening. For example, I believe that a China with no Communist revolution, with twenty bustling, enterprising Hong Kongs scattered up and down the China coast, would have come much closer to paralleling the postwar economic achievement of Japan. I doubt that such a China would have had the governmental strength and solidity needed for a giant power, partly because of the extreme social injustices that would almost certainly have been perpetuated. If this analysis is correct, however, such a China would have been far ahead, at least economically, of the new China today. On the other hand, this kind of speculation seemed to me totally academic in the circumstances, as it seemed to me academic to concern myself with the mistakes of the Great Leap Forward, when that strange episode lay so far in the past. The China which seems to me to show signs of great future success is the China that I saw in November-December last winter.

Obviously great risks still lie ahead of China, for example in the change of leadership that must inevitably come. Obviously, too, a wandering foreigner like myself, with no particular agricultural or industrial knowledge, cannot be sure of reading the signs correctly, even if he goes to places he knows well already, as I well knew the provinces where I spent most of my time. So when I say that I think China will be strikingly successful within fifteen or twenty years, it is like betting on a horse in a race with many risks.

On the other hand, I am convinced that China is now a good bet. I believe, first of all, that China has now entered the stage of mutation, in the direction of greater flexibility and what I can only call Chineseness, that should be easy to recognize for anyone who has read Chinese history. Such mutations have taken place at least twice before in the long Chinese past, after the short Ch'in and Sui Dynasties. Both were dynasties that remolded China. Both ended in revolutions. Both were then followed by the most successful governments China has ever had—and both the successor governments used the new structures just built up, and benefited from the sweeping changes just made. But I see no reason why a comparable mutation, this time, must necessarily be produced by an actual change of regime. A radical change of direction, tone, and purpose should be quite enough. I believe this kind of change has begun.

In the second place, I am firmly persuaded that almost everyone underrates the vast resource constituted by the Chinese people themselves—the most intelligent, ingenious, and hard-working people on the face of the earth, as far as I have been able to observe. Thirdly, I also saw major physical signs of success in the Chinese countryside. I was closely familiar with the countryside in the Second World War. It has been astonishingly and beneficially transformed, at least from the standpoint of the state's prosperity—for I do not pretend to be able to pass on what has really happened to the farmers who have carried out the transformation. Finally, I must observe that a bet on China's future success is the biggest single bet, from a rational historical viewpoint, that anyone can now make. China is after all seven times the size of Japan. In the last twenty years we have seen the impact of Japan's success. If China is, say, one-half as successful economically as Japan, we shall be living in a world with a new economic weight in it four times as great as Japan's weight. That means we shall be living with a new world balance, different from the balance familiar to all the generations since Western imperialism began in earnest in the early 16th century. This, therefore, is a bet that is well worth exploring from all possible points of view.

In closing, I must add one final comment on the intellectual life of the new China. I did not touch upon this in my reports from

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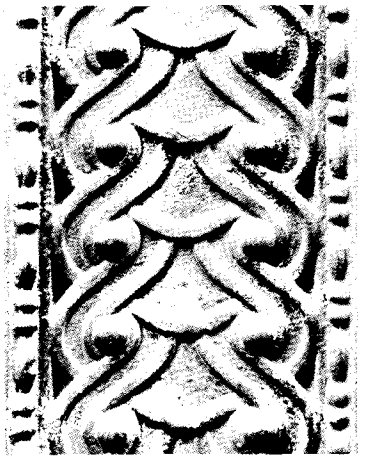

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China, because I felt totally incompetent to do so. I could find no trace of any intellectual life even remotely comparable to that carried on in Russia by the great dissidents like Solzhenitsyn and Mme. Mandelstam. I have no idea whether the China of the future will permit intellectual creativity, except in the area of science. In any case, it seems to me that for an American newspaperman, writing solely from the standpoint of American practical interests, this is a relatively minor question. What happens between China and the Soviet Union and ourselves; how China evolves, and particularly whether China becomes a giant power; what will then be the relations among the three giant powers, the U.S., the USSR, and this China of the future—these are the subjects that ought to interest American newspapermen. Other subjects may be left to persons of different formation, who may or may not be better equipped to deal with them.

JOSEPH ALSOP

Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

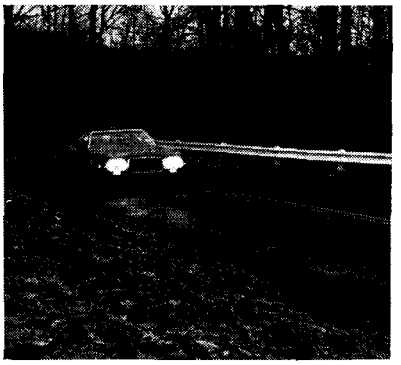
Sheila K. Johnson . . . fails to appreciate that China, like love, is a many-splendored thing, to use words popularized by one who has written much about both, but knows little of either. Mrs. Johnson tries to squeeze too much into variations on the fellow-traveller theme, and therefore slights the current appeal of China to Americans of many other persuasions.

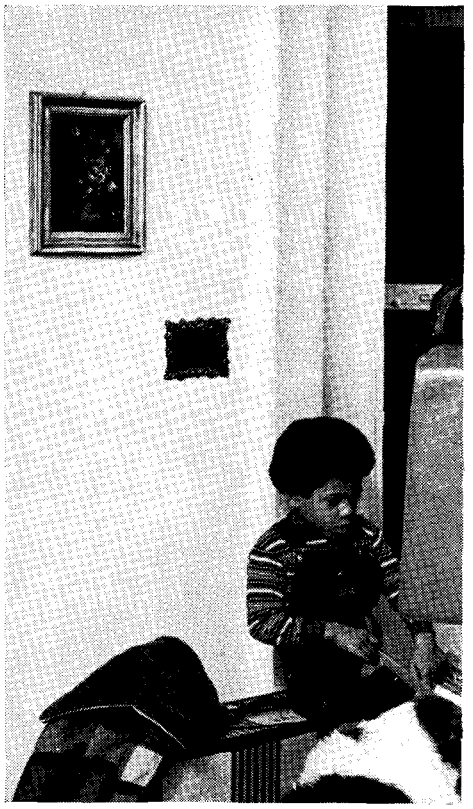
First, the appeal to the Super-Patriot: When others all about were talking of the evils of carpet-bombing, it was possible last December for Chinese and Americans to stand *mao-t'ai* glass to *mao-t'ai* glass toasting a growing friendship which could not be fazed by the mere raining of bombs on Hanoi. And, at present, benumbed 100 per cent Middle Americans can take heart from the considerateness of the Chinese government in not breathing a word about Watergate to the Chinese public, for it would be bad form to publicize the troubles of a new friend. (A Chinese "journalist" recently remarked, "You Americans shouldn't talk so much about Watergate, for it can only make Mr. Nixon unhappy, and he is such a nice man.") . . .

Second, there is the appeal of China to all unreconstructed Tories who thought that they would never live to see the day when it would be possible in polite society to extol the sweatshop and the company union. Anyone with even the slightest streak of Andrew Carnegie in him will certainly find pleasure in learning that Chinese housewives work in their "neighborhood cooperative factories" eight hours a day, six days a week, for less than nine dollars a month, and he can become absolutely ecstatic on being told by earnest radicals that the women neither need nor want more, for rent costs only a pittance, medicine is nearly free, child care is provided for a nominal sum, and their free day can be given to moral uplift and political consciousness-raising—and anyway there is nothing to buy, for China is not a materialistic society addicted to consumerism. If that isn't enough to bring together Tory and radical, think of the condition of the Chinese male factory worker who gets between one and two dollars a day, who is now "enthusiastically welcoming" the establishment of government-sponsored unions that exhort him to work harder and longer and not ask for more pay. As radical young Americans proclaim that "Chinese workers are supremely happy" with their Spartan lives, the unreconstructed Tory must think that he is hearing again the blessed words of those 19th-century divines who preached that hard, uncomplaining work, avoidance of gin and sin, and proper moral dedication was the only path to ultimate happiness.

How can we criticize a country which has brought together our radicals and reactionaries and made it impossible to tell them apart? . . . Just possibly, China rather than the post-industrial West will succeed in truly bringing an end to ideology.

But beyond ideology there remain appeals which can't be classified in general terms but reflect a moment in history. Some Americans may have empathy for China as another society struggling to pull back from the brink of chaos, permissiveness, disregard for authority, and what have you. Most Americans wouldn't have the nerve themselves, but underneath they are prepared to tip their hats in silent admiration for a people who will take no nonsense from their young, happily ship millions of high-school graduates off to lonely years of learning what labor is all about on isolated farms and in gloomy factories, and insist that any who are admitted to college





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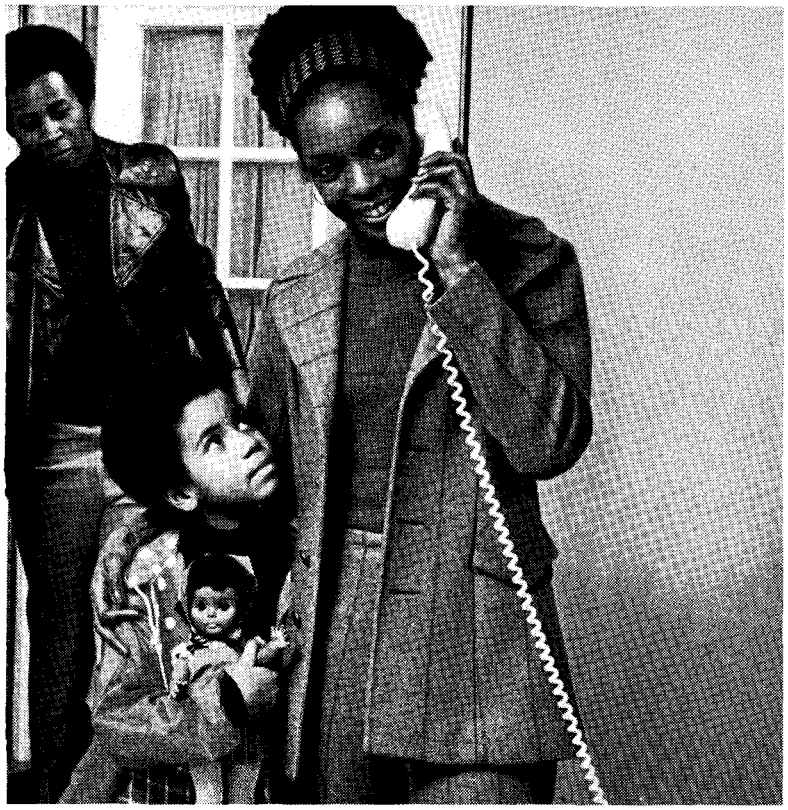

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will have to follow a narrow and precise curriculum without any time-wasting electives and imagination-provoking courses. . . .

There are many other appeals of China which Mrs. Johnson overlooks, and which space precludes mentioning, but most serious of all, she fails to consider the question: What do those of us who are committed to old-fashioned liberalism see in China that is not offensive? That is a tough question. The Chinese have made it no easier since they agree with both radical and reactionary that liberalism is a thing of the past. But there is one slight difference, and that is that the Chinese, unlike the American radical or reactionary, shares with the rear-guard liberal an appreciation for civility, and . . . wherever you can find civility these days, you shouldn't pooh-pooh it. It may not last very long, but let's hold on to it while we can.

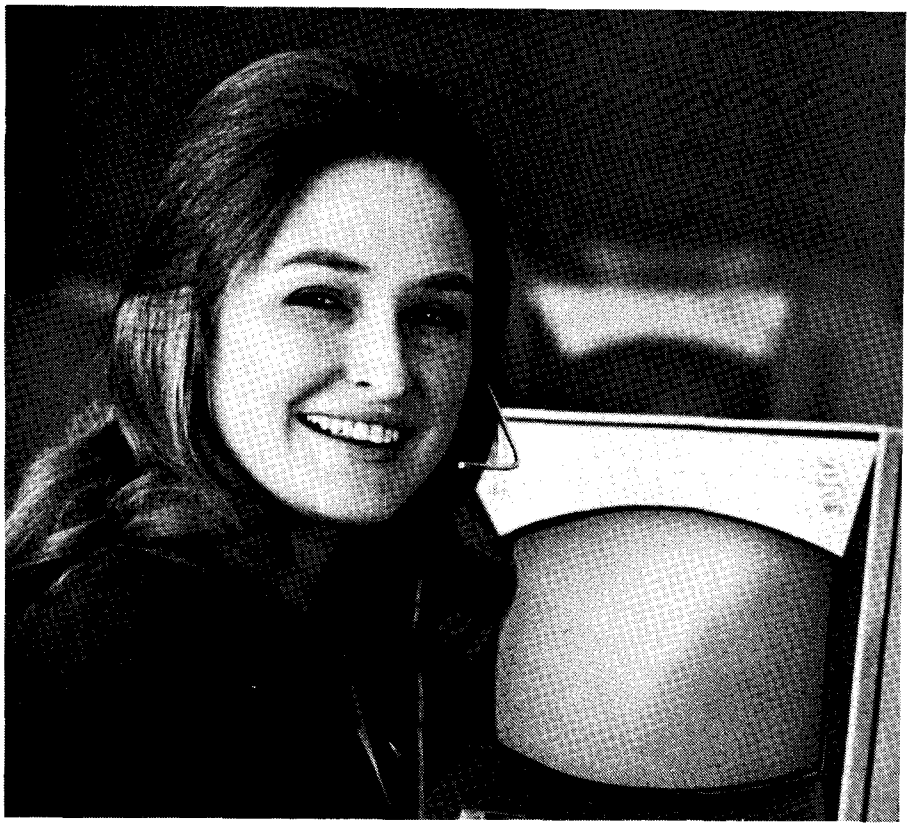
LUCIAN W. PYE
MIT
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Many medical scientists are equally, or perhaps even more, infatuated with China than the writers Sheila K. Johnson comments on in her article. Mrs. Johnson is disappointed with the superficial impressions and conclusions of most of the writers she discusses, but it is perhaps even more difficult to understand the enthusiastic subjugation of medical experts to Chinese propaganda in the field of medicine.

One visitor to China, Dr. Sam Rosen, professor emeritus of Otolaryngology at New York's Mount Sinai School of Medicine, recently presented a lecture on acupuncture and Chinese medicine in general to a group of several hundred physicians in Cincinnati. Dr. Rosen's talk, which I attended, was followed by a film illustrating surgical case reports and showing actual operations.

We know that acupuncture has been practiced in China for 4,000 years and was used for all sorts of ailments. In 1969, however, it was suddenly discovered that the insertion of a few needles in certain points of the body can cause complete anesthesia and a patient can be operated on without having to use any other medication, sedation, or other anesthetic agents. But even if we were willing to grant that acupuncture has the mysterious power to replace ordinary



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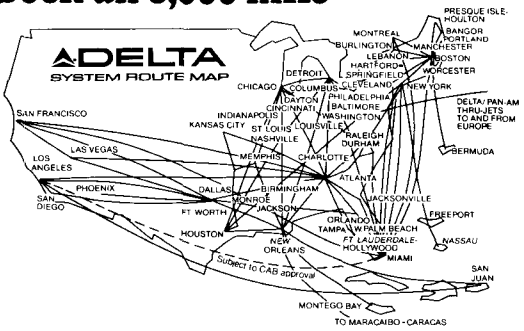

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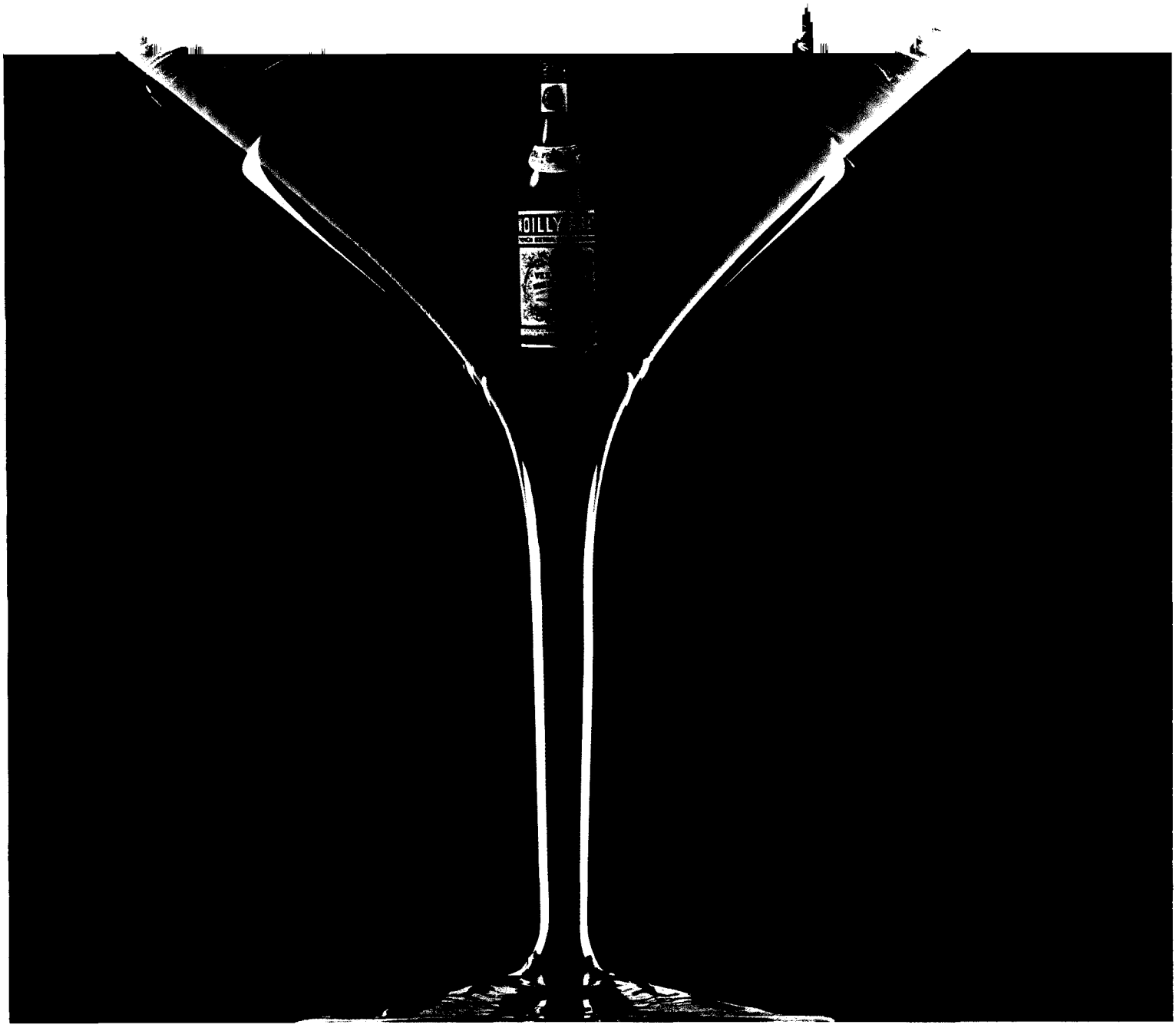

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anesthetics, the lecture and film presentation went far beyond this claim. Let me cite a few examples.

A middle-aged woman is shown being operated on in Peking for the removal of a large fibroid tumor of the uterus. With the acupuncture needles she is completely relaxed. During the operation she talks to the surgeon and attendants. No hemostats or sutures are used to stop bleeding which is usually abundant in this type of operation. When the operation is finished, the woman immediately sits up on the operating table and shakes hands with everyone concerned. To our amazement we were shown a group of women working with pick and shovel only a few days later and were told that this post-operative woman was one of them. Apparently the acupuncture had not only succeeded as an anesthetic but had caused immediate healing and a miraculous cure, since, according to what we saw, the incision healed promptly without sutures and even heavy physical work did not open the wound.

Another patient who is being operated on for a gastric resection, which means losing a major part of his stomach, is not only completely relaxed and even entertains the surgical team during the operation, but at its conclusion he sits up on the operating table without help and enjoys a glass of orange juice. Thus there is no sign of the lack of peristaltic action which always occurs post-operatively in gastrectomy, nor is it necessary that the fresh wound heal, a process which everywhere else in the world requires intravenous feeding for at least five or six days before the patient can take even an ounce of water.

An eight-month-old boy is brought into the operating room squirming, yelling, and crying and being held down by three attendants. But he responds immediately to the acupuncture needle and lies back on the operating table relaxed but conscious. . . .

In another case, a large brain tumor is removed in no time. There is no bleeding of any kind, electro-cauterization needles are not in sight, nor are there any hemostats or sutures. The trauma of surgery does not cause any temporary coma—always the case in this type of operation—and the patient is also completely well right after the operation. . . .

These are only a few examples of what we saw. One would think that even a moderately critical observer could reach only one conclusion: namely, that the films were staged propaganda. Indeed, unless one were to believe either in witchcraft or miracles, there is no other possible explanation. Yet in an audience of several hundred physicians, representing almost every field of medicine and including chairmen of medical and surgical departments of various hospitals, there were only three skeptics. . . . Perhaps the enthusiasm for all things Chinese which Mrs. Johnson describes can cause even scientists to lose all touch with reality.

A. M. Wigser, M.D.
Cincinnati, Ohio

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Thank you for the delightful article on China and her lovers by Sheila K. Johnson. Although I enjoyed the rhapsodies of Salisbury, Galbraith, Alsop, *et al.* as good *kitsch*, I think it is Anonymous, the Shanghai official who answered a question about Lin Piao with, "Eat your lunch," who deserves immortality. . . .

Helena Skalecki
New York City

Sheila K. Johnson writes:

I am pleased to stand corrected by Lucian W. Pye, and I find it intriguing to juxtapose his letter to that of Joseph Alsop. For all his acerbic wit, Mr. Pye is certainly as fond and admiring of the Chinese as Mr. Alsop claims to be (aside from being a noted scholar of Chinese politics and society, Mr. Pye was born and raised in China), and I think it is partly his affection for the Chinese that makes him long to see their government evolve into something less ideological and more libertarian. By contrast, Mr. Alsop declares that the fate of intellectual life in China is a "relatively minor question" and that "the morality of a government, *so long as it is not for export*, . . . concern[s] only the people being governed." Employing those standards, we would have to be unconcerned about the fate of Solzhenitsyn or of Soviet-Jewish intellectuals trying to emigrate to Israel, and indifferent to the massacres and breaches of human rights being perpetrated by the current regimes in Greece, Uganda, and South Africa (to name just a few).

I do not, of course, regard countries "as large, unchanging entities, toward which one must always have a constant view"; if that were so, I would not be so upset by certain

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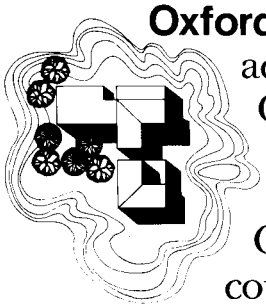

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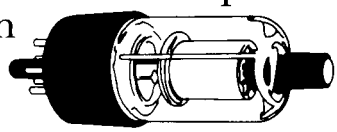

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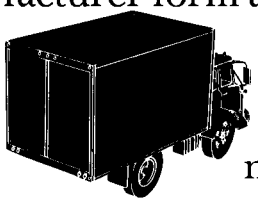

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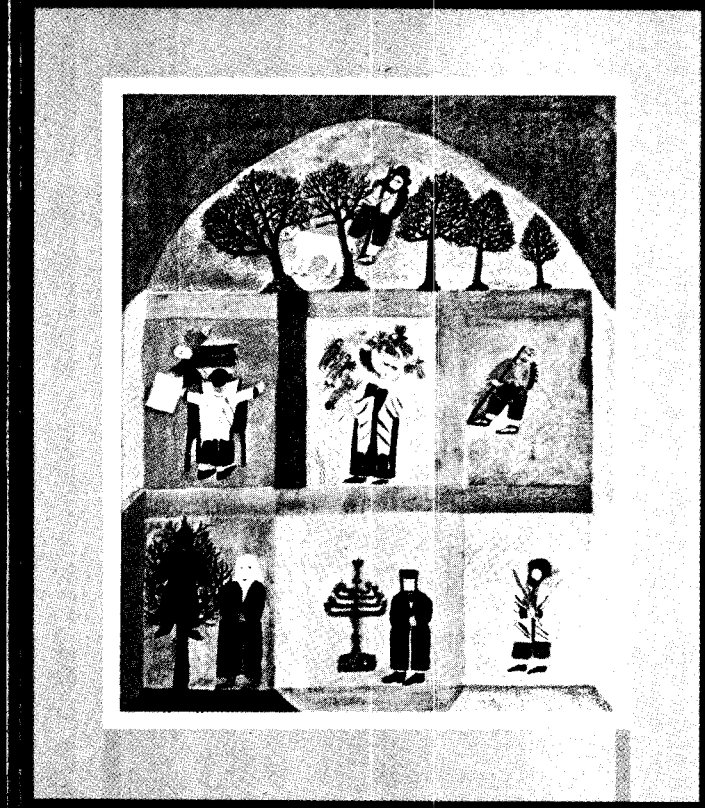

THE HOLIDAYS

Harry Lieberman

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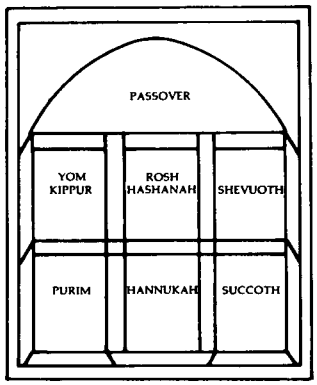

THE HOLIDAYS is typical of Harry Lieberman's joyous treatment of religious themes as he charmingly crowds a lifetime into a single picture, vibrant with color. Naive yet sophisticated, the overall effect can be likened to a Hasidic combination of biblical literalness and inspired symbolism. A faint nostalgia for the teachings of childhood and its lost innocence permeates the entire group despite its paradoxical appearance of stained glass panels in a wood frame.

Harry Lieberman's own life is as fascinating as his paintings, which win high critical praise wherever they are shown. Although he started his painting career late (at the age of 78) and as a primitive, there is nothing amateurish about his work. In fact, the richness of the color and detail in his interpretations of Biblical themes imbue them with great vitality and warmth.

Born in a typical *shtetl*, Gnieveshev, pop. 500, near Warsaw, nephew of the village Rabbi, Harry Lieberman followed the Hasidic Sect of Mystic Ecstasy founded by the Baal-Shem-Tov. He came to this country in 1906 and worked at first as a clothing cutter on the lower East Side of New York. The confectionary business beckoned next, and the one he and his wife started grew and prospered until he retired to Great Neck, New York, in 1950. There his primary interest was chess but, when his chess partner fell ill—Harry Lieberman turned to painting.

Now in his nineties, he is still exhibiting his work in both one-man and group exhibitions; and it is collected both here and abroad by museums, individuals, and institutions.

"Lieberman turns an intense and innocent eye on the Bible and Talmud, and the results are better than the usual product of the Grandma Moses school . . . his paintings are unimpeded pleasures." —*The New York Times*

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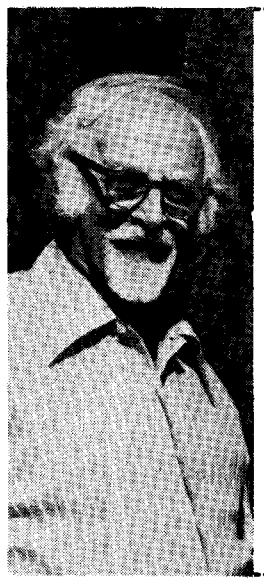

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leftist scholars who, in addition to praising China, are arguing that Japan is just as imperialist, war-minded, and anti-democratic as it was in the 1930's. What I was mainly deploring in my article is the sort of black-and-white stereotypic thinking that makes China all-bad one day, and all-good the next. Mr. Alsop notwithstanding, I believe that such a radical change of outlook cannot be explained wholly in terms of changing circumstances within China. Instead, I believe there are too many visitors going to China who are unwilling to raise difficult questions (such as, for example, those raised by Dr. A. M. Wigser), just as there are too many visitors prepared to swallow any and all Chinese answers. "Eat your lunch" may be an adequate response to a four-year-old who asks an adult an embarrassing question, but it does not strike me as a universally acceptable way to deal with political and human issues.

Attica

To the Editor of Commentary:

Because of my involvement in the Attica proceedings, I had decided to avoid comment on the McKay Commission report. However, Roger Starr's article ["Prisons, Politics, and the Attica Report," March] gives so misleading an impression of both the Report and the underlying events, that I feel compelled to write.

1) Mr. Starr attacks the Commission's analysis of the origins of the uprising because it "never explored . . . the testimony of those who might have done the planning . . . the sixty inmates whom the authorities regarded as the probable riot leaders." In fact, the Commission had a very lengthy interview with Herbert X. Blyden, who was probably the most prominent of the inmates' leaders at the negotiating table, and the inmate indicted for the Tombs uprising (which indictment was dismissed); Mr. Starr refers to him as one of those who was ready to "defy [prison conditions] and to take hostages," in Mr. Starr's explanation of why the uprising was probably planned. Richard Clark, another prominent leader, was invited to testify but chose instead to make a statement attacking the Commission for an anticipated whitewash of the state. Most of the others (who numbered eighty, not sixty) refused to talk because they feared that the assurances of confidentiality given the

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Commission by the prosecutor would be dishonored. (This in fact happened.)

2) It is *not* true that "mail and book censorship were lifted almost entirely. . . ." A month before the uprising the New York *Times Magazine* was excluded because it contained an article on the then-living George Jackson; both immediately before and long after the uprising, the *Amsterdam News*, *Playboy*, *The New Left Reader*, the *Village Voice*, the *Black Scholar*, and many, many other books, magazines, and newspapers were excluded, including almost anything on black liberation. Only a federal court suit forced some easing, almost a year after the uprising. There was virtually *no* change in mail censorship, except for attorney-client mail, until long after the uprising.

3) One of Mr. Starr's major points is that conditions at Attica weren't that much worse than elsewhere, and therefore it is not likely that "objective conditions caused the riot." Indeed, conditions at Attica were *not* that much worse. This is why we have had so many riots and disturbances elsewhere, both before and after September 1971, because of these widespread "objective conditions," and not because of "revolutionaries" at Attica—e.g., a strike at Attica in 1970 *before* the specific events to which Mr. Starr ascribed the 1972 uprising; an uprising at Auburn, New York in November 1970; other uprisings, both bloody and otherwise, in Indiana, Ohio, Oregon, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Michigan, Nevada, Florida, Arizona, California, Washington, D.C., Maryland, Georgia, Ohio, Idaho, Connecticut, Texas, Kentucky, Rhode Island, and in other state and federal prisons.

4) Whether the uprising was planned or spontaneous was not the central question facing the Commission, but rather: "Why did the uprising happen? How was the prison taken over by the inmates? Why wasn't a peaceful solution achieved? Why did 43 persons die and hundreds of others suffer injuries during the four-day period?"

5) The Commission's condemnation of taking hostages was based clearly and unequivocally on moral grounds, and so appears more than once. Moreover, the Commission revealed and condemned inmate brutality at the outbreak of the uprising.

6) The Commission did not accept what Mr. Starr calls the inmates' ideology and "rationalizations" for other crimes. It took no position on that issue, but merely reported it and said that the prison administration's failure to comprehend and deal with it was a major cause of rising tensions.

7) It is not true that the Commission never gives alternative accounts of any incident in order to allow the reader to decide for himself. See, for example, the Dewer-Lamorie incident which precipitated the uprising; the Oswald message to the inmates on Sunday; and the entire account of the assault.

8) We *cannot* depend on the criminal investigational process to tell us about "the events of the riot and its aftermath." Candid judges, lawyers, and laymen usually agree that criminal investigations are poor ways of getting at the full truth under the best of circumstances; obtaining the full truth is especially difficult where, as the first Watergate prosecutions indicate, and as is true of Attica, that investigation is run by a prosecutor subordinate to a chief executive directly and controversially involved in the events at issue. It is no accident that almost two years later, there are still no indictments for the incredible brutality by state officials during the takeover.

Many more examples could be added but only one item will be, for it so neatly exemplifies Mr. Starr's approach: the publishers are not "slightly disappointed at the book sales," but are very pleased: contrary to Mr. Starr's report, 130,000 paperback copies have been sold (apart from hard cover), not 100,000, and in *three* printings, not just one. Moreover, the report was nominated for a National Book award.

HERMAN SCHWARTZ
Faculty of Law and Jurisprudence
SUNY
Buffalo, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Roger Starr's reanalysis of the Attica riot corrects the romantic thinking of the Attica Special Citizens' Commission. But it also points up the more widespread reluctance to draw a line between political protest and criminality. Can murder and rape be political crimes and, if so, can murderers

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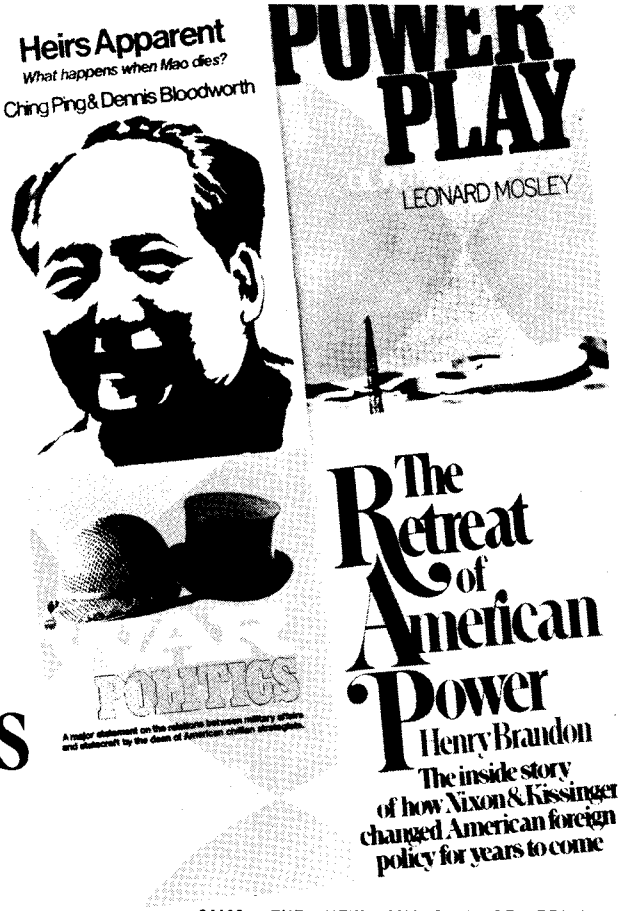
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and rapists be political prisoners? Not if the concept of political crime applies to persons prosecuted and imprisoned for their *opinions*. When these opinions give rise to *acts*—such as Eldridge Cleaver's program of redressing racial inequality in the United States by raping white women—traditional legal theory ignores the alleged justification as illegitimate. But some "liberals" believe that political motivation is an extenuating circumstance. The Attica Special Citizens Commission did not go all the way down this road, but it seemed to excuse the rioters by focusing on "justified grievances too long gone unredressed by insensitive authorities."

The New York *Times* devoted the front page of its *Book Review* of December 17, 1972, to a review of books dealing with Attica; the reviewer went considerably beyond the Commission in condoning the rioters and condemning officials. The next day I sent the enclosed letter to the editor of the *Book Review*, which was acknowledged but not published:

> . . . The reviewer was shocked by the willingness of Governor Rockefeller and Commissioner Oswald to risk the lives of guards and inmates by ordering an assault on the prison: "To such politicians, the lives of such poorly-connected men probably do not matter much."
>
> An extremely unfair inference, in my opinion. The reviewer chose to play down the unpleasant alternatives faced by Rockefeller and Oswald: (1) delay the assault longer with the risk of death to all of the hostages and to some of the inmates or (2) yield to prisoner demands for amnesty and safe passage to a foreign country. . . . Perhaps delaying the assault or a personal visit to Attica by Governor Rockefeller might have reduced the loss of life. Alternative courses look better *now* than they did in the confused days of the uprising. But the reviewer should not think that *amnesty* was a viable alternative. In every prison, unarmed and outnumbered guards are potential hostages of inmates. Makeshift weapons (such as spoons fashioned into knives) are available to inmates even in tightly controlled prisons, and they are more readily available in prisons where work-release and liberal visiting policies exist. The safety of guards and prison administrators depends on the belief of inmates that hostages cannot be traded for freedom. If this belief is undermined—by one or two well-publicized uprisings in which such trades are made—prisons can no longer operate.
>
> Some critics of prisons would rejoice to hear this conclusion. The closing of all prisons and the substitution of community-based rehabilitative programs is the objective of some reformers. Unfortunately, despite the many faults and failures of prisons, chronically violent and predatory offenders cannot always be contained in the free community. Incarceration seems better than execution, so, until something better is devised, we need prisons. . . .
>
> JACKSON TOBY
> Institute for Criminological Research
> Rutgers University
> New Brunswick, New Jersey

ROGER STARR writes:

Herman Schwartz, who served as one of the "observers" assembled at the request of the Attica rebels, has devoted much of his professional career to the reform of penal institutions and the redress of wrongs suffered by individual convicted defendants. I find it reassuring that one so sympathetic to the cause of prisoners should disclose so little factual basis for his sweeping opening assertion that I gave a "misleading impression" of the McKay Commission's report and what he calls "the underlying events."

Readers of my article may remember that I criticized the report because it grossly overemphasized the importance of sincere prisoner grievances in analyzing the causes of the revolt; because it blandly concluded that the revolt was "spontaneous," while omitting inconvenient facts and directing the reader's attention away from other evidence; and because it grossly oversimplified the institutional problems of "rehabilitation," particularly in the light of the theory of black exculpability which it itself showed to be widely held among the "new breed" of younger black inmates.

Mr. Schwartz does not quarrel with my discussion of the omissions (such as the mess-hall gas jets) from the McKay Commission's account of the riot; he accepts my own account of the actual state of affairs in Attica before the tragic events began; he takes no exception to my discussion of the rudimentary state of the art of institutional rehabilitation of offenders, on which the McKay Commission

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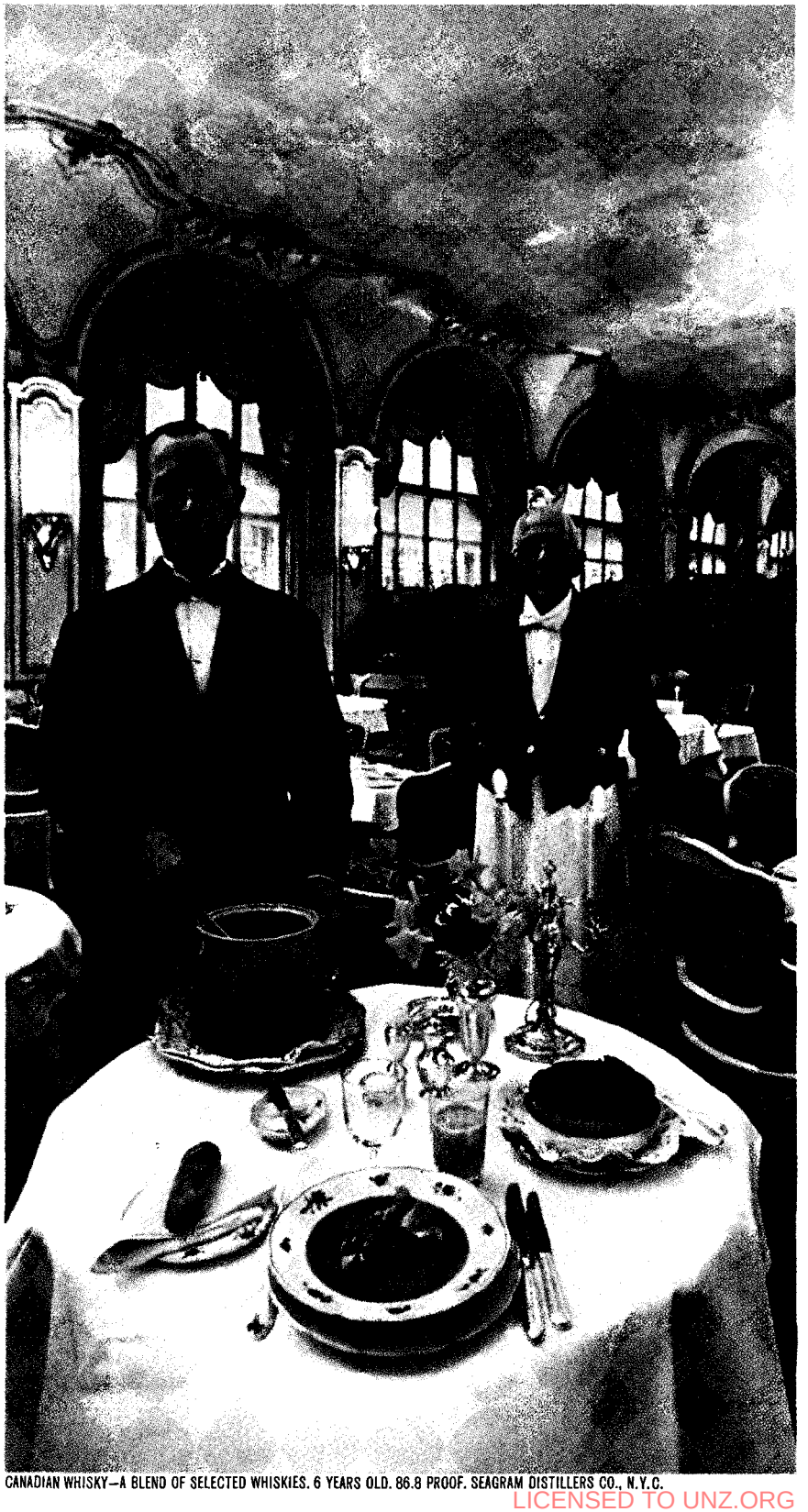

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Yet if Jacques Lipchitz was one of the first to apply the principles of cubist form to sculpture—and if, as he said of himself, he was "always a cubist"—it is in another sense that he finally commanded international attention. Cubism had always been an art of heroic form rather than of heroic themes. Lipchitz, turning his attention to the grand subjects of mythology and the Bible, forged a style that could accommodate such material. In some ways he ceased to be a modern artist. Working within an emotional climate that recalled the great efforts of Michelangelo and Rodin, he created monumental works that transcended our own time. In so doing he set aside his youthful experiments in favor of an art that would be capable of sustaining his own mature passion and eloquence.

The central figure of Jacques Lipchitz' mythology was Prometheus—who stole fire from the gods and brought it to mankind. Zeus punished Prometheus by chaining him to Mt. Caucasus, where a vulture fed upon his liver until Heracles—with the consent of Zeus—interceded and set him free. For Lipchitz, Prometheus symbolized the triumph of light over darkness, of education over ignorance, of the effective struggle for liberation in the face of arbitrary punishment and hardship. His interest in the figure apparently traces to 1931; but, with the Hitlerian threat of 1933, Prometheus took on new significance for him. By 1936, the Prometheus he created for the Paris World's Fair was not only chainless but had triumphed over the vulture.

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rested its suggestion of alternative penal policy.

The sole factual statement with which Mr. Schwartz takes issue is my comment that "mail and book censorship" had been lifted almost completely before the riot. In effect he tells us that he believes that "almost completely" should mean more nearly completely than I meant it to mean. Since, in a practical world, the superintendent (warden) of a penal institution is responsible both for its safety and for the actual handling of mail and publications received, it is not surprising that decisions made by an individual superintendent conflict, at times, with established departmental policy or court decisions. The Department of Correctional Services did abolish mail and book censorship almost completely *before* the Attica riot.

Mr. Schwartz's first point is based on a remarkably imprecise reading of my article. I did not attack the Commission for its failure to interview the alleged riot leaders who refused to be interviewed. My argument with the Commission rested, rather, on its assurance that it had "no evidence" that the riot was planned, without noting simultaneously that it had not been able to interview all the alleged riot leaders themselves.

I do not understand Mr. Schwartz's failure to notice that his third point is precisely one of the major implications of my article. If, as Mr. Schwartz agrees, conditions in Attica were no worse than in other penal institutions, why did the Attica uprising take so unique a form? At what other institution did a leadership clique emerge so quickly to demand named "observers" who included not only some with an interest in penal reform, but also others whose credentials suggested (and whose later acts confirmed) that they were more interested in stimulating confrontation than in changing prison conditions through negotiation? During what other prison uprising were three inmates killed by multiple stab wounds long after the capture by their colleagues of a section of the prison, and apparently long before the forcible recapture of the whole prison by the authorities? During what other prison uprising was such a conclave of news media representatives assembled, drawn clearly by the personalities of selected observers? During what other prison uprising were terms as conciliatory as those agreed to by the authorities shouted down without serious discussion or negotiation? During what other prison uprising did the leadership express its final defiance by putting knives to the throats of a group of hostages?

Mr. Schwartz's fourth point—that the question of whether the riot was pre-planned by rioters is irrelevant to the question of how the revolt started—is to me incomprehensible. I suspect that the Commission would be equally puzzled. Its finding (in my view highly questionable) that there had been no planning was, after all, one of the major conclusions of its own report.

Mr. Schwartz tells us, as his sixth point, what we already know and boggle at: the Commission "took no position" on the ideological rationalization that transforms common felonies into political offenses. I wish he would have elucidated the Commission's grounds for expecting the rehabilitation of those offenders who are ideologically convinced that the responsibility for their criminal conduct is society's, not theirs, and that their anti-social conduct is, in fact, constructive and liberating.

Mr. Schwartz's seventh point chides me for saying something I did not say; his eighth indicates that he and I have different views of courts and commissions.

Finally, Mr. Schwartz tells us that the publishers are happy with the sale of 130,000 copies. Apparently, he inferred from a conversation that they were happy; I inferred from a conversation that they were not. One factual comparison might be useful. While Bantam printed 130,000 copies of the Attica report, it printed *two million* copies of the Kerner Commission report.

I cannot close without expressing my surprise at Mr. Schwartz's tone. Were there not some moments in those terrible four days at Attica when Mr. Schwartz abandoned any real hope of achieving the peaceful settlement in which he invested so much effort and humanity? Did he not think that his task had become impossible be-

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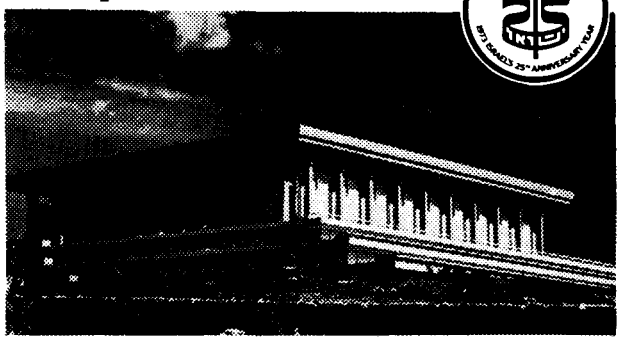

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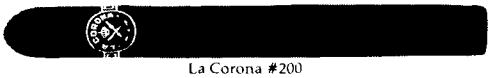

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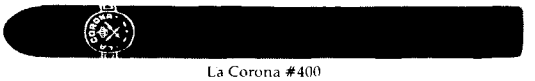

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cause the prison leaders included some who sought neither peace nor prison reform, but a political showdown with the assistance of some of the observers, and at whatever bloody cost to their less sophisticated fellow prisoners? On these most vital questions, why is he silent? Discussion of prisons is complicated in America today by a widespread acceptance by current prison reformers of the mischievous non sequitur: "Once wronged, then forever right." I will not list historic occasions on which this fallacy delayed perception and remedy of dangerous threats to peace and justice. It seems now to blind some advocates of prison reform to the real difficulties of planning and administering the physical organs of criminal justice. The fact that a prison is less humane that one might like it to be, or that the criminal justice system is imperfect, scarcely sanctifies all subsequent conduct of convicted lawbreakers, or excuses the failure of investigators to appraise that conduct with the objectivity that is every man's due.

The Op-Ed Page

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I wish to congratulate Carl Gershman on "The *Times* Op-Ed Page" [April]. Letters of criticism to the editor of the *Times*, including my own, have been sidetracked on this very subject, and Mr. Gershman has performed a public service in exposing this newspaper's tendency to provide a major forum for the extremists in our society. . . .

GEORGE FIELD
Jamesburg, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to thank Carl Gershman for bringing the failings of the "unimpeachable" New York *Times* to the scrutiny of the public. . . .

Another illustration of the *Times*'s one-sided treatment of Communist China which Mr. Gershman has documented involves a book published in the United States in 1972. *The Revenge of Heaven*, by Ken Ling, is an autobiographical study of a Red Guard leader based on written and interview materials obtained by a research team under the direction of Ivan D. London, professor of psychology at Brooklyn College. This work, which has also been published in England, and translated into Japanese, German, and Chinese, was not considered important enough to be reviewed by the *Times*. Every book about China that has been reviewed in the paper sings the praises of the Chinese system and government. . . .

CYNTHIA DACHOWITZ
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . As Carl Gershman implies, without stating it explicitly, the reason for the Op-Ed page's special attractiveness is that, by deliberately aiming beyond the day-to-day churning of current national and worldwide events, it shares in the aim of all writing which relinquishes currency in favor of longevity, haste in favor of depth, in varying degrees. Depth of understanding through presentation of individual opinion in the widest variety was the Op-Ed page's own original claim to existence, and Mr. Gershman finds that "it did not in general fulfill its promise" regarding depth. Why? Because in its airing of Top, Bottom, Left, and Right, it failed to come up with a Middle-Center. . . .

Individualism in the pages of the *Times* has come nowhere near the extremes to which it shall come, and it will always be divinely and diabolically opposed to the vague, conglomerate, shapeless social agreement Mr. Gershman seems to seek. A social thought is a shallow thought. Give me "two states of mind, at opposite poles to be sure and yet equally distant from contemporary reality" any day. Being a thoughtful thinker and an avid reader and a disciplined writer, I have no need of the "ease" Mr. Gershman craves. He has written a long synopsis of the thinking of others without saying anything himself. . . .

RAOUL ORCEYRE, JR.
New York City

CARL GERSHMAN writes:

If Raoul Orceyre, Jr. were really a "thoughtful thinker" (is there any other kind?), he would have no trouble understanding my message. It wasn't necessary for me to go into a long analysis of the Op-Ed page. The *Times* provided ample rope to hang itself.

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Rewriting "Hamlet"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the view of John P. Sisk ["The Curious Analyzer," May], perhaps Shakespeare might have done better to have rewritten Act V, Scene 1 of *Hamlet*, leaving out some of the things which Mr. Sisk considers curious and having Hamlet speak the following in an aside before entering the graveyard:

A boneyard, ha! It almost tempts me to
Speculate upon death, the logic whereof,
Should I on it meditate aloud,
Especially in a manner indirect,
Must render me in peril, since the minds
Of those who dwell in this dim realm are marked
By gross illogic and foul reasoning.
Thus should they have established a surveillance
By means of something extra surreptitious:
A bugging gadget stashed in Yorick's skull,
If I attempt to make a point with vigor
To my friend here, who is a little slow,
And should a mind that's to the banal born
Have come by patronage to occupy
Polonius's seat, with simple intellect
About on par with that of quondam snoop,
Which portends that which will in later day
Occasionally erupt in COMMENTARY,
It won't be long before young Hamlet, Junior,
Receives a royal charge of lunacy
And hustled be unto the nearest nuthouse.
Therefore, I'll none of it. Banality's the thing,
Not looking in a bunghole for a king!

SUSAN MORRISETTE
Enfield, North Carolina

JOHN P. SISK writes:

It is good to learn that my essay has stimulated, or at least aroused, someone to the point of objecting to it and not simply using it as an occasion for her own *tour de force*. In the event that she is really objecting, I will say first that nothing in "The Curious Analyzer," as I read it, implies that Shakespeare should have rewritten Act V, Scene 1. It seems to me to assume a quite conventional reading of this scene, one that is perfectly content with it as it came from the hand of the Master.

As to the verse (which is not always as blank as it might be), I have trouble getting a grip on its argument. I do suspect, though, that "gross illogic and foul reasoning," "simple intellect," "to the banal born," and "quondam snoop" are meant for me (they certainly don't go with Horatio, and Polonius is dead). But if so, why? In connection with what in my essay?—since the problem seems to involve more than my reading of this one scene. But let that be. As one of the many who have been struck with the resemblance of *Hamlet* to modern detective fiction, I am delighted that Susan Morrisette has made her Hamlet suspect that there might be a bug in Yorick's skull. This harmonizes with a thought that I have so far kept locked in my own skull. That Claudius is no dummy. Knowing the habits of melancholy men, why wouldn't he long before Act V have planted that saucy gravedigger in the boneyard as part of his effort to find out what is bugging Hamlet?

Symposium

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Just when many readers are still angry with COMMENTARY for the one-sided and impressionistic treatment of Open Admissions ["Higher Education for All? The Case of Open Admissions," by Martin Mayer, February], you offer an even-handed and multi-faceted series of focused articles in your symposium on "Nixon, the Great Society, and the Future of Social Policy" [May]. The breadth of views expressed, and the resulting areas of agreement and dissonance running through these commentaries, make for fascinating and enlightening reading. Congratulations.

HANS B. C. SPIEGEL
Department of Urban Affairs
Hunter College
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As Michael Harrington says, fratricide and the purge mentality on the Democratic Left are to be avoided. But since Tom Kahn has chosen to carry his feud with Harrington all the way back to *The Other America*, a look at the past as reflected in his contribution to the COMMENTARY symposium is in order.

Writes Mr. Kahn: "To have taken Mr. Nixon seriously was to have supported the ABM (Any-

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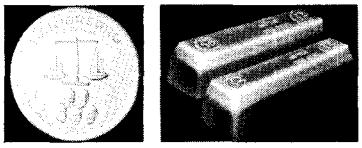

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body But McGovern) drive at the Democratic convention and to have gone all out for Hubert Humphrey in 1968." Political history, or so it seems, ends with McGovern's nomination; "taking Nixon seriously" had no implications during the 1972 election campaign, when the only alternative to Nixon was McGovern. It is obvious that something other than the logic of Mr. Kahn's argument prevents him from saying that McGovern ought to have been supported.

PHILIP E. DEVINE
North Adams, Massachusetts

TOM KAHN writes:

I have no "feud" with Michael Harrington. I have political differences with him. The fact that they are strongly felt does not reduce them to a feud. Philip E. Devine has recently departed the Social Democrats, U.S.A., presumably because of these differences. So has Michael Harrington, who is actively fostering a split within the SDUSA. So these differences must be important. Or do these gentlemen waltz in and out of political organizations for trivial reasons?

As for "fratricide and the purge mentality," Mr. Devine slays me. When the New Politics people were busy seizing the Democratic party, trampling all who stood in their way, yet knowing full well that they did not represent the majority of Democrats, nobody heard Michael Harrington's sweet admonitions against all this "fratricide and the purge mentality." When the Daley delegation was thrown out of the convention (which even McGovern now acknowledges was wrong), and when elected officials were excluded, and when the labor delegates were elbowed off the scene, why didn't we hear Harrington inveighing against "fratricide and the purge mentality"? When the mainstream and traditional forces in the Democratic party, the forces that win elections, were being pushed around by McGovern's bright young men, where was Harrington's eloquent voice of moderation and reason? Harrington and the other New Politicos start a war, prosecute it with ferocity and some indifference to means, and then, when the battle turns against them, these sturdy warriors yelp that the other guys aren't playing nice.

As for what it meant to have taken Mr. Nixon seriously in 1972, I stand by what I said. No, Mr. Devine, it is not true that "political history, or so it seems, ends with McGovern's nomination." All that ended with McGovern's nomination, so ardently desired by Harrington and his friends, was the faintest possibility of defeating Mr. Nixon. And it is not true, really, that during the 1972 election campaign, "the only alternative to Nixon was McGovern." It is truer to say that in the 1972 campaign, there was no alternative to Nixon. Richard Nixon was reelected President in Miami Beach on the day the Democrats nominated George McGovern.

What gets me about people like Harrington who supported McGovern for the *nomination* is their unabated and unabashed political arrogance in the wake of tidal failure. A curious thing: despite their inclination toward large "moral" judgments, they are utter strangers to compunction, remorse, penance, or contrition. Even humility eludes them. Listening to some of the noises from their camp these days, you would think that those of us who predicted the catastrophe—who warned against it and did everything possible to stop it—were proven wrong, and that those who promoted the catastrophic candidacy in the name of a new political era were proven right.

Letters on Letters

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Robert W. Greene is like many other gifted humanists: he has no fear of venturing into social-science debates even if in the process his own lack of social-science literacy is exposed. In his reply to my letter [Letters from Readers, June] he produces a new index of economic success: income per number of children in the family. Even though the Irish may have now exceeded all Gentile groups in income and education, they still aren't really successful because their income (and presumably their education too) must be distributed among all those hungry mouths.

I guess we can't win. In the old days it used to be argued that the Irish couldn't become successful in American society because large families interfered with the development of the proper achievement ethic. Now that that prediction has been disproved, Mr. Greene comes along and informs us that the success really doesn't count because it has to be shared with more children. So what if Irish Catholics earn $809 a year more than the national average, standardized for

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city size and region? The money still must be distributed among all those large families.

And so what if the (again with proper standardization) average Irish Catholic has a year more of education than the national average? That education must be spread among grasping little Irish mouths.

Unfortunately for Mr. Greene's contribution to economics, the Irish family at 2.8 children is only .2 higher than the American mean.

I regret to deface the pages of COMMENTARY with statistics, but I continue to wonder what there is about certain kinds of Irish-American scholars that inclines them to deny that very success of which their entering the scholarly ranks is a part. . . .

ANDREW M. GREELEY
Center for the Study of American Pluralism
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In the exchange between David Z. Robinson and Norman Podhoretz [Letters from Readers, July] there is a discussion of whether anti-Semitism is a settled issue in the intellectual and academic communities. I spent the past academic year at Yale, and I would like to present a student's view of this question. (I should mention that I am a Gentile and that as of this time I have withdrawn from Yale.) I noticed a fair amount of freely-expressed anti-Semitism of varying degrees in the course of the year. However, the primary objection seemed to be based on the fact that the percentage of Jews in the Yale student body, and in the freshman class as well, appeared to be around 30 per cent, considerably higher than the percentage of Jews in American society at large.

Most students felt strongly that to equalize opportunity in our society, quota systems for minorities, based on the percentage of the group in the population, were both necessary and desirable, and they often expressed the notion that the same quotas should be applied to Jews, even though this would mean fewer Jews in the student population. Personally, I never heard any view expressed that could be considered anti-Semitic in the sense of demeaning the intellect or human worth of anyone on the basis of his Jewishness; indeed, many students, aware of past injustices, deliberately avoided saying anything that could in any sense be construed as anti-Semitic. The views that were expressed (with the exception of certain deprecatory references, to JAPS, Jewish American Princesses) were based on the . . . idea that if fewer Jews were admitted, more blacks, or members of other disadvantaged minority groups—Jews, though a minority group, are not considered disadvantaged—could be accepted by the university. . . .

LELAND BRYANT ROSS
New Haven, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Readers who were told by R. E. Steussy [Letters from Readers, July] that C. D. Darlington's *The Evolution of Man and Society* "has never been reviewed, let alone issued by an American publisher" will be pleased to know that all 753 pages of the book have been available since 1971 in a Simon & Schuster Clarion edition. . . .

LUDWIG SELIGSBERGER
Newton, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . A review of C. D. Darlington's *The Evolution of Man and Society*, written by Nathaniel Weyl, can be found in *Modern Age*, Volume 15, Number 3, Summer 1971.

STEVEN H. ROSEN
San Francisco California

Nursing Licenses

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Higher Education for All? The Case of Open Admissions" [February] Martin Mayer states: "The 'nursing profession' has now succeeded in imposing an A.B. prerequisite on future nurses in New York State." I would like to point out that the recent changes in the New York State Education Law relating to the professions and the specific change in the legal definition of nursing have not imposed any such prerequisite. Graduates of nursing programs conducted by community colleges and hospitals are admitted to the same licensing examination as are graduates of baccalaureate nursing programs.

EILEEN A. MCQUAID
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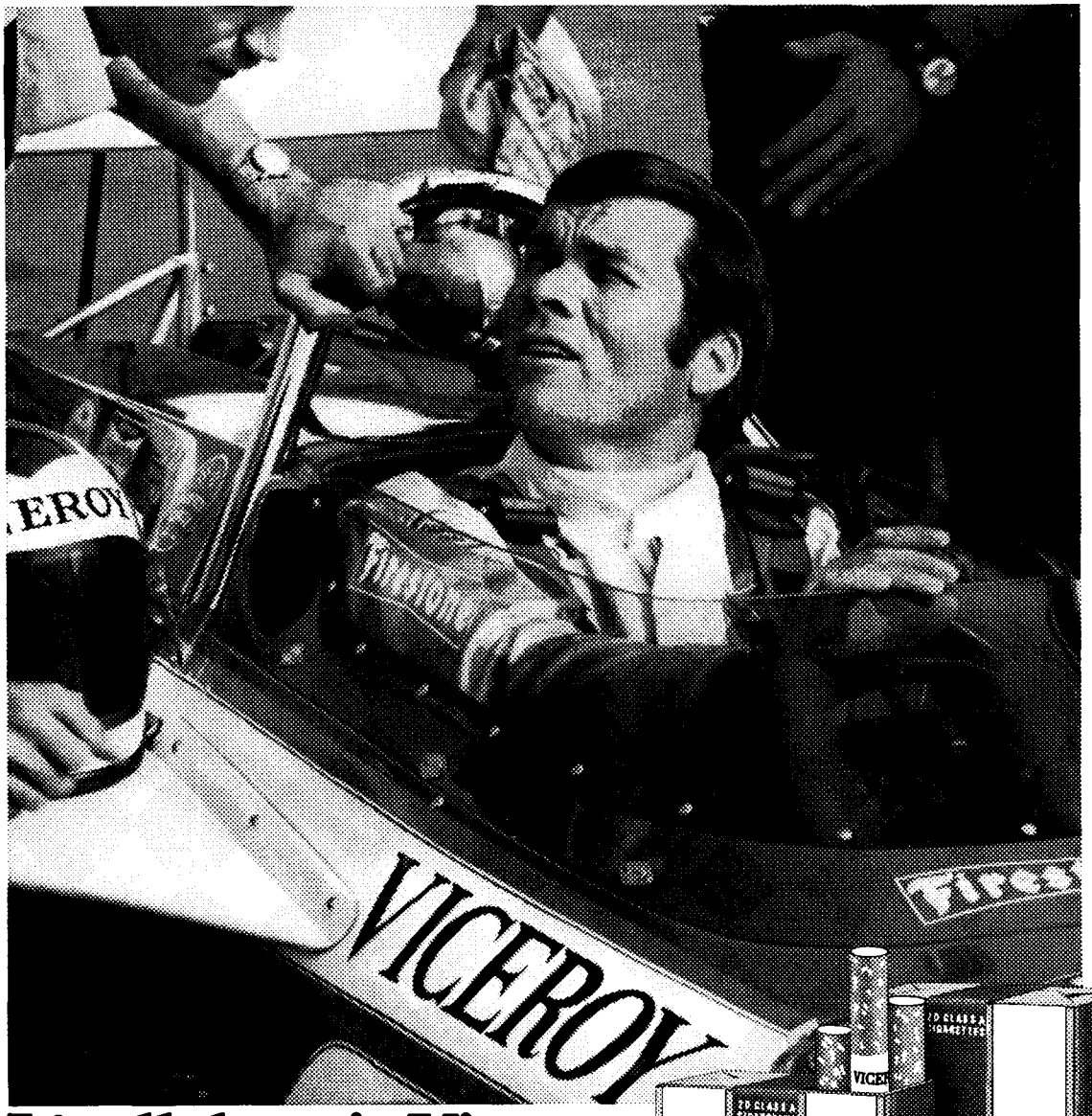

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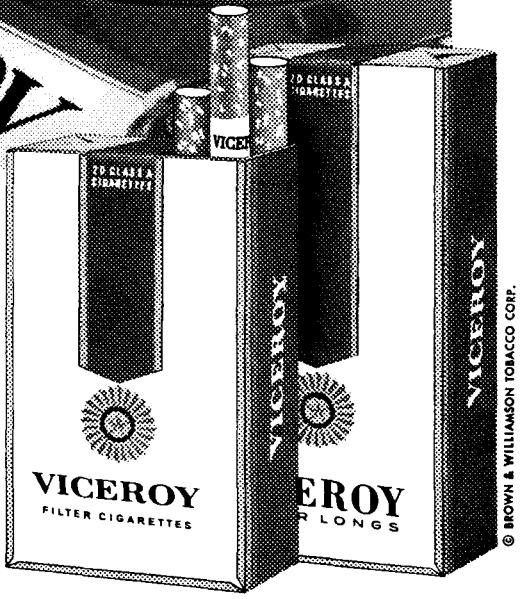

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An Appointment With Watergate

Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab

As the witnesses testified before the Ervin Committee, one could hear the rustling of a two-hundred-year-old American ghost. The Watergate affair, standing as it does for the whole bag of "White House horrors," was not just the creation of evil men; it was the symptomatic rumbling of a deep strain in American society, of which Richard Nixon has come to seem the almost perfect embodiment. To characterize the behavior which has emerged as "dirty tricks" is to minimize it. To characterize it as "fascist" is to evade its specific American meaning. The United States, and the Nixon administration, had an appointment with Watergate. The form this appointment has taken is significant because of its similarity to certain episodes in America's past; and also significant because of the ways in which it departs from those characteristic episodes.

Watergate begins with the idea, first expressed in the testimony of James McCord and Bernard L. Barker, that the people involved were engaged in a holy mission to combat the secret internal enemies of the United States. Throughout the testimony before the Senate Committee, there runs a self-justifying description of the background of the Watergate horrors: disruptive demonstrations, violence, trashing, bombings, burnings, civil disobedience—much of it conducted by shadowy figures who were never apprehended. And against that background, there was the failure, as the Watergate conspirators saw it, of large segments of the American public to understand the danger fully and the frustrating need this bred to submit to constraints in fighting it.

John Mitchell, who had come to volunteer nothing, said that the Nixon mission was so important that Mitchell would have done anything "short of treason and high crimes" to insure the President's reelection. Jeb Stuart Magruder, who had come, clean-cut, to volunteer everything, was more explicit. He said that "because of that atmosphere that had occurred, to all of us who had worked in the White House, there was that feeling of resentment and frustration at being unable to deal with them on a legal basis." And about the clandestine activities of various members of the Nixon team—the break-in and bugging which gave Watergate its name, the Ellsberg break-in, the proposed raid on the Brookings Institution, the "enemies list," the plans for a new intelligence unit, and so forth—he said: ". . . Although I was aware they were illegal, we had become somewhat inured to using such activities in accomplishing what we thought was a cause, a legitimate cause."

There is a direct line between the rhetoric of the Watergate conspirators and the statement in 1799 of a prominent Bostonian, Jedediah Morse, who said that the new country had internal

> enemies whose professed design is to subvert and overturn our holy religion and our free and excellent government. . . . Among those fruits of their endeavors may be reckoned our unhappy and threatening political divisions; the increasing abuse of our wise and faithful rulers; the virulent opposition to some of the laws of our country; and the measures of the Supreme Executive; . . . the industrious circulation of baneful and corrupting books, and the consequent wonderful spread of infidelity, impiety, and immorality.

But what links Jedediah Morse to Jeb Stuart Magruder is more than a matter of conspiracy theory. It is also a matter of circumstance. In detail, of course, the circumstances of 1799 were different from those of the late 1960's, but their essential nature was remarkably similar, just as both were similar to those of the 1920's. In each case, an important segment of the American population felt that it was being displaced in power and status; in each case this feeling generated a cultural and moralistic "backlash" among the segment in question; and in each case a conspiracy theory was developed to provide ideological justification for the backlash.

The Backlash of the 1920's

American history is rich in examples of movements fostering some complex conspiracy-theory explanation for the subver-

Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab collaborated on *The Politics of Unreason*, a study of right-wing extremism which was recently reissued in a paperback edition by Harper Torchbooks. Mr. Lipset is professor of government and sociology at Harvard; Mr. Raab currently holds a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Their previous collaborations in Commentary include "The Election and the National Mood" (January 1973) and "The Non-Generation Gap" (August 1970).

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sion of American morals and institutions by a foreign-linked cabal. These include the anti-Illuminati agitation of the 1790's, the anti-Masonic party of the Jacksonian era, and assorted anti-Catholic movements such as the Native Americans and Know Nothings of the pre-Civil War period and the American Protective Association of the 1890's.* In trying to understand Watergate, however, it is especially instructive to look at the backlash of the 1920's which was not only typical of such episodes in American history but also had a direct relationship to current events.

In 1920 the Census Bureau reported that, for the first time, urban population was larger than rural population. The metropolitan areas, which were becoming the power sites of the nation, were numerically dominated not by Protestants, but by immigrant Catholics and Jews. And even among the Protestants of the city, those denominations which formed the backbone of the traditional Protestantism of the small towns and rural communities of the Midwest and the South—the Methodists and Baptists—were poorly represented.

For this population the shift of power and status was symbolized and dramatized by defections from the "traditional way of life." The Scopes trial held the old-time religion up to national ridicule, and the rise of "modernist" morals and manners seemed to signal an even larger cultural decline. In response, Henry Ford's anti-Semitic Dearborn *Independent* flayed away at those who were undermining the morality of the country by the spread of pornography in Hollywood, the corruption of baseball by gambling, and the deafening cacophony of jazz. In addition to individual efforts like Ford's there also developed a substantial backlash organization, the second Ku Klux Klan. Like its older namesake of Reconstruction days, this KKK was certainly racist, but promoting racism was not its primary purpose. As one historian has pointed out:

> The 1920's meant "modernism." And "modernism" among other things meant the waning of church influence, particularly over younger people, the breaking down of parental control, the discarding of the old-fashioned moral code in favor of a freer or "looser" personal one, which manifested itself in such activities as purchasing and drinking contraband liquor, participating in ultra-frank conversations between the sexes, wearing skirts close to the knees, engaging in various extreme forms of dancing in smoke-filled road houses, and petting in parked cars. A host of Americans were unwilling, or unable, to adapt themselves to this post-war culture. In the Klan they saw a bulwark against the hated "modernism," an opportunity to salvage some of the customs and traditions of the old religio-moralistic order.

At its height this KKK had a membership of somewhere between three and six million. Some historians estimate that it included a quarter or more of the adult male Protestant population. At various times it virtually ran a number of states, including Oregon and Indiana.

The KKK clothed its cultural backlash with a rich conspiracy theory. Secret collusion and conspiracy are of course a constant in political life, but conspiracy theory goes far beyond the perception of that simple truth. It is comprehensive in nature. It posits a broad network of conspiracy—and it holds that the conspiracy is *decisive* in shaping the course of history. Several decades after the KKK, and a century-and-a-half after Jedediah Morse, Senator Joseph McCarthy restated the basic assumption of conspiracy theory, which rejects the possibility of honest error and disregards the independent effect of social change on history:

> How can we account for our present situation unless we believe that men high in this government are concerting to deliver us to disaster? This must be the product of a great conspiracy. . . . What can be made of this unbroken series of decisions and acts contributing to the strategy of defeat? They cannot be attributed to incompetence.

And finally, conspiracy theory holds that the conspiratorial forces are secret because they are evil, and would lose if they fought out in the open. As one post-World War II conspiracy theorist, William Guy Carr, put it:

> History repeats itself because there has been perfect continuity of purpose in the struggle which has been going on since the beginning of time between the forces of Good and Evil to decide whether the Rule of Almighty God shall prevail, or whether the world shall literally go to the Devil. The issue is just as simple as that.

For the KKK, the sources of the Great Conspiracy were ". . . Bolsheviks . . . Foreigners . . . Jesuits . . . and descendants of Abraham." But the KKK was a fairly loose organization, and different branches would emphasize different centers of conspiracy. The most prominent Northern KKK leader, a former Socialist party organizer named D. C. Stephenson, argued that the Jewish international bankers were responsible for World War I and the deterioration of America. Others made the Jews responsible for the Bolshevik revolution. The *Searchlight,* the national organ of the KKK, suggested that a secret Catholic army was preparing to take over the country. KKK spokesmen contended that Warren G. Harding had been murdered by Catholic plotters. (Similar charges had been made by earlier extremist movements concerning the assassinations of Lincoln, Gar-

* No better analysis of these movements has ever been written than the late Richard Hofstadter's *The Paranoid Style in American Politics.* Hofstadter should have lived to interpret Watergate for us.

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field, and McKinley.) And some Klan leaders specifically proposed that the Catholics and Jews were united in the Great Conspiracy.

However, it is important to note that this ethnic bias was a subsidiary element of the conspiracy theory of the 1920's which, like all modern right-wing conspiracy theories, had a more basic and universal "enemy" at its center: the "intellectuals"—writers, journalists, professors, college students, and the educated class in general. (Even the ethnic targets of the KKK were made to fit this basic image of the enemy as intellectual; hence the emphasis on Jesuits and Elders of Zion.)

The intellectuals were secretly conspiring to steal the country from its rightful owners and rulers, and the rightful rulers were fighting back. Thus Hiram Evans, the Grand Wizard of the KKK, expressing a 1926 version of the Middle-American backlash:

> We are a movement of the plain people, very weak in the matter of culture, intellectual support and trained leadership. We are demanding, and we expect to win, a return of power into the hands of everyday, not highly cultured, not overly intellectualized, but unspoiled and not de-Americanized, average citizens of the old stock. . . . This is undoubtedly a weakness. It lays us open to the charge of being "hicks" and "rubes" and "drivers of second-hand Fords." We admit it.

But if there is a hidden conspiracy, if the enemy is winning by not playing fair, if indeed, he has subverted the very weapons of persuasion, then the ordinary rules of fair play must be broken in fighting him. As one KKK leader put it (prefiguring Barry Goldwater's "Extremism in the pursuit of liberty is no vice"):

> In a nation, toleration becomes a vice when fundamentals are in danger. . . . The American liberals . . . have extended their liberality till they are willing to help the aliens tear at the foundations of the nation. They have become one of the chief menaces of the country, instead of the sane intellectual leaders they should be. . . .

The backlash of the 1920's, accordingly, was marked by severe violations of democratic procedure. A restrictive and racist immigration law was passed. A General Intelligence Division was established in the Attorney General's office to investigate domestic radical activities. It gathered and indexed the histories of 200,000 people for its suspect files, while the Department of Justice conducted raids which resulted in the arrest of 10,000 people. All this was done without benefit of supporting legislation by Congress. Then state and local governments followed suit, as did private vigilante groups which hounded prostitutes and adulterers as well as political offenders. Some were lynched; many others were tarred and feathered.

Nixon as Provincial

THE displacing developments of the 1920's were interrupted by the Depression and the war, but galloping megalopolization brought them back in the 1960's, and in force. In addition, of course, those who had previously been ruled out of America's "achieving society," the blacks, now declared themselves in. America's closed frontiers were closing in even further with the evident decline of American power and expansion abroad. Huge, highly-taxing welfare programs were concocted in Washington. The still resentful non-metropolitans, the entrenched labor forces in the cities, the postwar *nouveaux riches*, all began to feel insecure about their old or newly-won power and status.

This feeling was reinforced and given body by all those activities of the late 1960's ticked off by the Watergate witnesses: disruptive demonstrations, riots, violence, bombings, flag-burnings, civil disobedience. The attack on the culture was made explicit by the drug revolution, the sexual revolution, the gay revolution, and so forth. The moralists of the 1920's had complained bitterly about knee-length skirts; how were their descendants to feel about another eight inches of elevation? And most humiliating of all was our inability to defeat a small and underdeveloped Communist enemy in Southeast Asia. How was all this possible except as a consequence of demoralization and betrayal in high places?

When George Wallace received the support of a quarter of the American people in the opinion polls, he was clearly expressing the virulence of their backlash sentiments. Nevertheless, while everybody (including Henry Kissinger) waited, breathlessly anticipating a repressive right-wing movement like the KKK of the 20's, no such movement ever developed. Instead of the KKK, we got Watergate. Why? The answer to that question lies to a considerable extent in the political career of Richard Nixon and the complex relation of that career to America's backlash tradition.

It has often been pointed out that Nixon was originally the product of provincial America. He was raised in the backwater environments of Yorba Linda and Whittier in the 1920's, an area in which the Klan was relatively strong. Of course, most people in the area did not support the KKK, but they were affected by the same anxieties of displacement which lay behind the Klan. In a latter-day TV interview, Nixon himself said that the fundamental cause of unrest in this country is not war, poverty, or prejudice but "a sense of insecurity that comes from the old values being torn away." And not only did Nixon grow up in this area; it was also here that he first ran for political office immediately after World War II.

The backlash "package" of the 1920's included anti-radicalism; and after World War II, with

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the quick outbreak of the cold war, the revelation of widespread Communist espionage, and then the Korean war, militant anti-Communism became a leading backlash staple. Since almost all Americans were anti-Communist in one degree or another, and since there was a real Communist threat in Berlin, Czechoslovakia, Korea, China, and Western Europe, it is perhaps more accurate to say that anti-Communism was often used as the centerpiece of a backlash syndrome. Thus, to many on the political Right, Communism was made to symbolize the immoralities of "modernism" in general. As Senator Joseph McCarthy put it: "The great difference between our Western Christian world and the atheistic Communist world is not political . . . it is moral."

In this environment Nixon ran against Jerry Voorhis for Congress; and a few years later, against Helen Gahagan Douglas for Senator. In the Voorhis campaign he charged that his opponent had the support of radical groups, and that a vote for Nixon was a vote "to preserve the American way of life." To an American Legion post he declared that "the infiltration of Communists into public office is part of a design to impose a Communist form of government on the American people." This kind of public antagonism to Communism was a standard part of the temper of the times; indeed it was Jerry Voorhis himself who had authored the law requiring Communists (and any other left- or right-wing subversive group) to register with the Department of Justice. The fact that Nixon could attack the author of such a bill as soft on Communism helped give him his reputation as "Tricky Dick." And it also began Nixon's identification with the ideological backlash syndrome.

Nationally this identification was established for Nixon by his prominent role in the Congressional investigations and especially in the prosecution of Alger Hiss. In that role, he conducted himself with dogged persistence, but without any marked McCarthy-like excesses. Nevertheless he was pictured as the heavy villain by everyone who refused to accept the fact that Hiss was guilty. Nixon himself, in his *Six Crises*, pointed to the underlying support for Hiss as

> the symbol of a considerable number of perfectly loyal citizens whose theaters of operation are the nation's mass media and universities, its scholarly foundations, and its government bureaucracies. . . . They are not Communists, they are not even remotely disloyal. . . . But they are of a mind-set, as doctrinaire as those on the extreme Right, which makes them singularly vulnerable to the Communist popular-front appeal under the banner of social justice. . . . As soon as the Hiss case broke and well before a bill of particulars was even available, much less open to close critical analysis, they leaped to the defense of Alger Hiss—and to a counter attack of unparalleled venom and irrational fury on his accusers.

By becoming an enemy to this group, Richard Nixon became a hero to the backlash ideologues —a position he consolidated by conducting a slashing anti-Communist campaign against Helen Gahagan Douglas for the Senate in 1950. To be sure, her own Democratic opponents in the primary had referred to her as one of a "small subversive clique of red-hots conspiring to capture, through stealth and cunning, the nerve centers of our Democratic party," and the like. But Nixon did no less, distributing the famous Pink Sheet handbills which pointed out that Helen Gahagan Douglas had voted 354 times the same way as the Communist party-liner Vito Marcantonio. Most of those votes, of course, had nothing to do with any Communist-related issues, yet such, again, was the temper of the times that Helen Gahagan Douglas ended up publicly accusing Nixon of giving "aid and comfort to the Communists. On every key vote Nixon stood with party-liner Marcantonio against America in its fight to defeat Communism." In any case, Nixon won and in the process earned additional love from the Right and additional hatred from the Left.

Nixon as Cosmopolitan

HOWEVER, if Nixon's reputation as a prime defender of Americanism, the old American virtues, sat well in his Orange County constituency, in the nation's other backlash regions, and in his own mind as a winning political stance, he was also a flawed defender in the eyes of backlash extremists like the leaders of the John Birch Society—flawed by a tendency to cosmopolitanism. In the first place, he had always been an internationalist. From the beginning of his Congressional career, he was deeply committed to and gratified by his work on the Herter Committee which set up the first foreign-aid plans, even though the concept of foreign aid received a negative poll in his own district. Worse still, he argued during the age of McCarthyism that the Republican party must avoid extremism, a position which he expressed later in these words:

> It is as wrong for the Republican party to become a far-right party as it is for it to become a radical party. As a matter of principle it can never look back and it must never put itself in the position of dividing Americans into classes. To take the far-right viewpoint would destroy it as a national party.

Of course, this attitude was partly a function of political acuity. But cosmopolitanism among political conservatives is, in general, just that: a function of acuity, of enlightened self-interest based on a history-wise understanding of the necessity not just to "look back," but to accept and even promote certain types of social change. The "Eastern Republican establishment," often the educated descendants of the old

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robber barons, became increasingly cosmopolitan on precisely that basis. Moreover, the cosmopolitan understands that political victory cannot be won in America by a fringe party or an ideologically pure faction, and he understands that majorities only accrue to coalition parties which can engage in political enterprise, which can deal comfortably with some element of change (or with some element of resistance to change, as the case may be: the cosmopolitans in the Democratic party saw that when the McGovern provincials took over from them; and the cosmopolitans in the Republican party saw it when the Goldwater provincials took over from them).

Conspiracy theories and their attendant political implications are obviously not in the cosmopolitan style. Political cosmopolitans usually know that most grand conspiracy theories have, in fact, been old wives' tales. (Some become so "sophisticated" that they resist accepting even routine little conspiracies when they are proved, such as the Communist party spy rings in Washington which were related to the Alger Hiss case.) They know too that history is being changed by social forces which are not in any prime way subject to manipulation, let alone dependent on conspiratorial master-direction. And they know that the kind of departure from democratic process encouraged by extremist thinking is dangerous and normally does not serve their enlightened self-interest.

To be sure, none of this has prevented cosmopolitans from aligning themselves temporarily under certain circumstances with extremist movements and tendencies. During the early 1950's, for example, just such a marriage of convenience took place between establishment Republicans and Joseph McCarthy, although they always basically disapproved of his extremist provincialism and the methods which flowed therefrom.

Nixon was among those who disapproved. Apparently making a distinction between the way he himself conducted electoral campaigns, and the way he conducted government business, Nixon in office constantly pulled back from McCarthy-like statements. Even when armed during the Hiss investigation with clear evidence that high Democratic officials had, for various political reasons, failed to act on information of espionage activities, Nixon said: "There are some who claim that Administration officials failed to act because they were Communist or pro-Communist. But the great majority of our officials were not in this category, and I cannot accept this accusation as a fair one."

It was in fact Nixon who as Vice President finally engineered the confrontation which sank Joe McCarthy. With the Republican party now in power, McCarthy had, of course, become an embarrassment to it, while Nixon had become a full-fledged member of the cosmopolitan Eastern Republican establishment which had chosen Eisenhower over Taft and had (if somewhat reluctantly) accepted Nixon as Eisenhower's running mate. The result was that Nixon now became an object of attack by the extreme ideologues of the backlash.

Commenting on Nixon's bid for the Presidency in 1960, Robert Welch, the head of the Birch Society, explained that "the Insiders [the conspirators] think they can accomplish far more for the Communist movement, far more safely, with an Eisenhower-type administration, this time under Richard Nixon, than they would with a Kennedy or a Humphrey as President." When Nixon met privately with Nelson Rockefeller in the latter's Fifth Avenue apartment on the Saturday before the 1960 Republican convention, Phyllis Schlafly, a leading Goldwater pamphleteer, denounced him for making "himself acceptable to the New York kingmakers." Goldwater himself predicted that the alliance between Nixon and Rockefeller, who seconded Nixon's nomination at the convention, would "live in history as the Munich of the Republican party." Later, in the California campaign, Joseph Shell, Republican leader of the California Assembly, charged Nixon with being "soft on Communism."

For his part, Nixon denounced the Birch Society, and seemed to settle down as part of the cosmopolitan Republican establishment. He was booed by the California Young Republicans when he said he wanted to study an anti-Communist proposition before endorsing it, and told them: "The American Constitution has to apply even when you're fighting Communism."

Toward Watergate

For all this, however, Nixon never quite lost his favorable reputation among the ideologues of backlash. To many of them he was a strayed soul, perhaps reclaimable, rather than an ancestral enemy. Conversely, to many cosmopolitan Republicans, he remained suspect for the same reason—in addition to remaining subject to the normal dosage of snobbery against the provincial from Whittier, the same kind of snobbery which some of the Democratic elite directed at Lyndon Johnson.

But most important of all in affecting his future role was the fact that while at his cosmopolitan peak, Nixon suffered two demoralizing defeats: for President in 1960, and for Governor of California in 1962. At the end of that last disaster, he gave vent to one of the least controlled outbursts of his public life, possibly his most quoted words:

> . . . as I leave the press, all I can say is this: for sixteen years, ever since the Hiss case, you've had a lot of fun . . . you've had an opportunity to attack me . . . I leave you gentlemen, now, and just think how much you're going to be missing. You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore. . . .

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That speech had been festering for a long time. Once, during his campaign for Vice President, when a heckler shouted something about the "secret fund" story which had just broken, in another unprepared outburst, Nixon heatedly replied:

> You folks know the work that I did investigating Communists in the United States. Ever since I have done that work, the Communists, the left-wingers have been fighting me with every smear that they have been able to. Even when I received the nomination for the Vice Presidency, I want you to know—and I'm going to reveal it today for the first time—I was warned that if I continue to attack the Communists and the crooks in this government they would continue to smear me. . . .

But the forces he saw unfairly arrayed against him were not restricted to Communists. "The Hiss case," he later wrote,

> brought me national fame, but it also left a residue of hatred and hostility toward me—not only among the Communists but also among substantial segments of the press and the intellectual community . . . who have subjected me to a continuous utterly unprincipled and vicious smear campaign.

Nixon's ultimate triumph, his election to the Presidency in 1968, occurred in a sequence of events which could only have served to reinforce his sense of the power of his interlocking opposition. When Hubert Humphrey left the disastrous Chicago convention, he was 16 percentage points behind Nixon in the polls, in a three-candidate race. Yet by election day, the gap had closed spectacularly, and Humphrey's popular vote was almost equal to that of Nixon. Since polling began in 1936, no Presidential candidate had ever experienced such a precipitous decline. Just as in 1960—so it must have seemed to Nixon—the liberal establishment had again demonstrated its marvelous ability to turn public opinion against him. Little wonder, then, that immediately after taking office in 1969 the administration's chief ideological spokesman, Spiro Agnew, undertook to attack the "effete corps of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals," and to complain about news commentators and producers who "to a man . . . live and work in the geographical and intellectual confines of Washington, D.C., or New York City, the latter of which James Reston terms the 'most unrepresentative community in the entire United States.'" The depth of sentiment in high White House circles was expressed even more strongly when Attorney General John Mitchell, after complaining in a press interview in September 1970 about the "stupid kids," feelingly said: "The professors are just as bad, if not worse. They don't know anything. Nor do the stupid bastards who are running our educational institutions. . . ."

THUS while Nixon stood against and resisted blatant backlash extremism, and while he repudiated comprehensive conspiracy theories such as were held by the KKK and then by the Birch Society, he did have a markedly adversary relationship to those elements which have always formed the central core of conspiracy theories: the "intellectual community," the journalists, the Ivy League elite, the "liberals." Furthermore, Nixon explicitly put these elements together into a connected network, which he had indicated was hostile toward him and toward traditional American values. It was ironic that this man, one of whose main political purposes was to contain the excesses of right-wing extremism which he saw as inimical to the Republican party and to his Presidency, should have carried the atmosphere and the logic of that very extremism right into the White House and into the heart of the Republican establishment. Once in the White House, however, it became easy for the logic of that extremism to unfold, especially given the circumstances which the Nixonites found in Washington.

For the Washington they entered was still a Democratic town. Democrats not only held a majority in Congress, they clearly retained the sympathies of the potent civil service, including its upper echelons—not to mention the press corps, particularly those representing the most influential papers and the national TV news programs. The bulk of consultants were heavily liberal, as were the largely government-financed "think tanks," from Brookings to Rand. (Brookings was to be the target of a planned break-in, and Henry Rowen, the then president of Rand, appeared on the enemies list.) And then the evidence began to pile up, in the form of leaks and pilfered documents, that persons in high places in government were in collusion with this elite to expose and frustrate the new administration. As John Erhlichman described the way the administration people saw their situation:

> There were a number of holdovers in the executive branch who actively opposed the President's policies. . . . These people conducted a kind of internal guerrilla warfare against the President during his first term, trying to frustrate his goals by unauthorized leaks of part of the facts of a story, or of military and other secrets, or by just plain falsehood. The object was to create hostility in the Congress and abroad and to affect public opinion.

Meanwhile, outside government, there was the anti-war movement. Even though the New Left was obviously exhausted, even though the campuses had begun to quiet down by the fall of 1969 in response to troop withdrawals and the disappearing draft, many in the White House, finding confirmation in the May 1970 demonstrations on Cambodia, persisted in believing that the same "extra-parliamentary" forces which had

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destroyed Lyndon Johnson would, if left unchecked, destroy Richard Nixon too.*

It was also believed in the White House that the disruptive forces were being supported by foreign funds. When the FBI and the CIA reported that they could unearth no evidence of significant foreign involvement in the domestic New Left or in the anti-war movement, the White House staffers concluded that a new intelligence operation, controlled by the White House itself, was needed. Arguing for such an operation which would include proposals he himself described as "clearly illegal," a young White House aide, Tom Huston, wrote in a September 1970 memo to Haldeman:

> The biggest risk we could take, in my opinion, is to continue to regard violence on the campus and in the cities as a temporary phenomenon. . . . I believe we are talking about the future of this country, for surely domestic violence and disorder threaten the very fabric of our society. For eighteen months we have watched people in this government ignore the President's orders, take actions to embarrass him, promote themselves at his expense, and generally make his job more difficult.

The original plans, though initially approved by the President, were killed by the opposition of J. Edgar Hoover, who apparently saw the scheme as reflecting a negative evaluation of the FBI by the White House. And he was correct in this.

For now even Hoover was suspect. Huston told Haldeman in August 1970 that Hoover "has become totally unreasonable and his conduct is detrimental to our domestic intelligence operation." He particularly singled out FBI campus coverage as inadequate. And in March 1973, Nixon apparently reiterated to Richard Moore the curious myth which had become the in-house explanation, that Hoover could not be relied on to investigate Daniel Ellsberg properly since Ellsberg's father-in-law was a friend of Hoover's, a statement which, though also spread by Ehrlichman and others, was false.

To be sure, the situation with the FBI is clearly complex. Given the enormous number of terrorist bombings and other illegal acts in the late 60's and early 70's, there can be little doubt that the FBI and the assorted state and local police groups which sought to deal with them were largely unsuccessful. Few of the guilty were apprehended. Rarely did the law-enforcement agencies give advance notice of terroristic acts. As compared, for example, to the Israeli secret police, Shin Beth, which seems to know everything about Arab terrorism, the Americans were a failure. And this fact seemingly justified administration proposals to change proceduces, and even to create new agencies, the secret domestic intelligence evaluation group, under Robert C. Mardian, located in the Justice Department, and the covert "special investigation unit," under Egil Krogh, in the White House.

Placing blame on the FBI or other investigative agencies for failing to uncover the terrorists, however, ignored the nature of the protests of the 1960's. Unlike the Communist party of earlier decades, or the Arab terrorists today, both with centralized leadership, the recent American "Movement" was composed of literally hundreds, if not thousands, of separate, independent "cells," many bitterly hostile on ideological grounds to one another. There were few national organizations. Most of those which existed—the SDS, the Young Socialist Alliance, the Progressive Labor party, the Spartacus League—did not take part in terrorism, either for ideological or practical reasons. The bombings, the arson, the raids on government offices, were largely conducted by small local groups, often comprising a handful of people. It was quite impossible for the FBI or even the local police to penetrate these cells. And most of them evidently were clever enough not to let anyone in the above-ground anti-war organizations know who they were.

There was, then, no single large conspiracy, there were thousands of small conspiracies. Few of those were in a position to secure foreign funds or help, although some probably did. Alien

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* As noted earlier in S. M. Lipset's *Rebellion in the University*, surveys of college students in 1969 indicated that "a majority accepted the new Nixon administration policy of Vietnamization as a means of getting out. The administration was able to co-opt some of the campus opposition. Thus a Gallup survey of college students taken in May 1969 reported that when asked: 'Do you approve or disapprove of the way Nixon is handling his job as President?' 57 per cent approved, 37 per cent disapproved, and 16 per cent had no opinion. A second Gallup national student poll taken in the fall found that students were seemingly losing interest in protest, though they remained heavily against the war. *Newsweek*, in reporting the survey, concluded that 'the mood of the American campus is apparently undergoing a striking change: militancy and violence are in good measure giving way to passivity and personal introspection, and the revolutionary impulse seems—for a while at least—to have largely spent itself.'"

This situation changed drastically, of course, during the Cambodian events of May 1970, which stimulated the largest wave of student protest ever. But summer vacation and the withdrawal of American troops from Cambodia ended the demonstrations. The fall of 1970 witnessed a quiet campus, and surveys taken indicated a drop in support for radicalism. Increased campus conservatism was suggested in surveys taken in the spring of 1971.

Participants in the "Movement" agree with the import of these surveys. The high point in membership in SDS occurred in 1968-69. By the summer of 1969, it was a bitterly divided, shrunken organization. And the decline in SDS and other New Left groups continued from then on, the Cambodian protest interlude apart. The FBI reported these changes, noting that the anti-terrorist Trotskyist Young Socialist Alliance, with a few thousand members at most, had become the strongest radical youth group.

Thus those in the White House concerned with evaluating the strength of the "extra-parliamentary" opposition misread the signs. They thought the revolutionary "conspiracy" was growing at the very time their policies were undercutting the appeal of the radicals. They were, of course, not alone in this misjudgment. George McGovern's campaign was also premised on the assumption that the "revolution" of the 60's was continuing and even escalating.

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subversive forces would have had as little luck in locating the American terrorists as did the FBI; and Mardian and Krogh were later equally unsuccessful in finding them. Hence, both the CIA and the FBI were undoubtedly correct in reporting to the White House that foreign-supported conspiracies did not explain the continuation and spread of terrorism.

But such reports did no good, for conspiracy-theory logic had enveloped the White House. Much as extremists, both of the Left and of the Right, found it impossible to accept the fact that Lee Harvey Oswald was a loner linked neither to the CIA nor to Castro, so the White House could not accept a non-conspiratorial interpretation of Daniel Ellsberg's turnabout. Faced with the "betrayal" of a once-trusted supporter of the Vietnam war, they refused to see Ellsberg as a man who has always shown a need for passionate commitment, who, in the words of the CIA psychological profile which they rejected, had always been "either strongly for something or strongly against," and who had now reached a time of life when many men, especially very ambitious ones, "come to doubt their earlier commitments, and are impelled to strike out in new directions." The CIA profile asserted that "There is no suggestion that [Ellsberg] thought anything treasonous in his act. Rather, he seemed to be responding to what he deemed a higher order of patriotism." But in the White House view Ellsberg *had* to be part of a broader conspiracy, and anyone who doubted this—even the CIA or so reliable an ally as J. Edgar Hoover—must either have been misled or somehow corrupted.

The Two Sides of Watergate

In short, the behavior summed up in the name Watergate was typical, at least in form, of American backlash extremism. But if this is so, two important questions still have to be answered. First, how did this syndrome get seated so directly in the White House and in the Republican establishment? There had been other backlash administrations in Washington, but such administrations had usually taken care to separate themselves from extremist behavior while sympathizing with or tolerating it. Even after World War I, when the U.S. Attorney General's office was directly involved in a Watergate-type pattern, the activist-extremist centers like the KKK or the American Defense League were outside the government exerting pressure. Here the activist extremist center was the White House itself, and it was evidently self-starting. But secondly, why, emanating as it did from the highest places, should Watergate have been so pale and tepid an expression of extremist action?

The first question seems troubling, the second comforting—but they are both finally the same question, and the answer to both lies in Richard Nixon's remarkable personification of the American split: convincingly enough provincial, convincingly enough cosmopolitan. Because for enough people he stood for the backlash, while for enough people he stood for the resistance to factional extremism, he managed to reach the White House, and he also managed to prevent the formation of a classic extremist movement. He certainly defused George Wallace, who complained bitterly about it many times. Wallace told a national television audience: "I wish I had copyrighted or patented my speeches. I would be drawing immense royalties from Mr. Nixon and especially Mr. Agnew." In order to defuse the backlash, however, Nixon had to represent it himself, and it was this that brought the extremist syndrome right into the White House. Yet at the same time the "cosmopolitan" climate in which the backlash now had to operate also blunted and made it relatively ineffectual. After World War I Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer set up an extra-legal intelligence agency, and promptly swept many thousands of people into jail. Nixon's first attempt to set up an extra-legal intelligence agency was shot down by a cross word from Hoover, and he fell back to a "plumbers" operation which was neither massive nor very efficient. Second-story men all over the nation must still be chuckling over the ineptitude of the Watergate break-in itself. The plumbers found out nothing in the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist, and indeed managed only to guarantee Ellsberg's acquittal. Enemies lists were prepared, but for the most part they ended up in John Dean's files without being acted on. The proposal to deny government research grants to MIT because of the objections of its president, Jerome Wiesner, to administration military and foreign policies was never carried through, apparently because of opposition from the Pentagon and other government agencies. In order to harass people through their income tax, White House staff had to resort to sending anonymous "citizens" letters to the IRS, with scarcely impressive results. They bugged the wrong phones. They tried to "get something" on Daniel Schorr of CBS, but succeeded only in alerting him. Nor did they have a "chilling" effect on anyone, in the way that Joseph McCarthy so often did with an essentially one-man operation.

This is not to minimize the seriousness of these activities, nor to dismiss them as merely inept. Presumably, with more practice, the Watergate group could have improved its skills. In any case, a botched burglary is still a burglary, an unsuccessful assault on constitutional liberties is still an assault. But the point is that the Watergate horrors were perpetrated covertly, in the dark of the night, whereas in the 1920's, the illegal activities of the government were carried out in the open, and apparently with the overwhelming approval of the American people. In the Nixon administration, by contrast, the

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most elaborate operation was the cover-up, which is itself a measure of the restraining power of the cosmopolitan climate not only within the administration but in the nation at large—in, that is, the growing cosmopolitanization of the American people.

Thus, as compared with the 1920's, for example, the American people today are more willing to accept cultural and political differences. All three Presidents of the 1920's—Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover—publicly expressed themselves in racist terms. Harding supported the immigration restrictions on the basis of inherent "racial differences" and the unassimilability of anyone but Northern Protestants. Coolidge, in an article in *Good Housekeeping*, argued that "biological laws show us that Nordics deteriorate when mixed with other races." Herbert Hoover declared that "immigrants now lived in the United States on sufferance . . . and would be tolerated only if they behaved." Today no major party politician or officeholder could possibly air such views, and racists who hope to be elected are forced to mute their appeal.

On another front, the public receptivity to charges that liberals are "soft on Communism" has declined considerably, and even during the Vietnam war—a war, after all, against Communism—various restrictions of the rights of Communists were struck down by the courts, by universities, and by trade unions, without a serious murmur from the public. Perhaps the best indication of the growth in cosmopolitanism has been Nixon's foreign policy and its acceptance by the bulk of the American population. A quarter of a century of cold-war anti-Communism in which Richard Nixon himself played a key role simply went out the window in the face of its failure to meet the test of reality in Vietnam and in connection with Sino-Soviet relations.

None of this means that fanatical anti-Communism or bigotry has disappeared. What it does mean is that more and more Americans have learned to lace their biases with democratic restraint. *That* is the nature of the cosmopolitan impulse, and its growth in the past fifty years seems to be related to the spread of formal education. The 60's taught us that education can breed a cultural intolerance of its own, but for people coming out of a traditionally anti-modernist milieu, education is still likely to encourage a greater readiness to accept diversity, if only on grounds of enlightened self-interest. On that score, of course, the difference between the American population of the 1920's and that of the 1970's is statistically spectacular. Between 1920 and 1970 the proportion of the college-age population enrolled in higher education jumped from 8 to almost 50 per cent. There were 600,000 college students in 1920; there are 9 million today. College professors alone now constitute a major occupational group, over half-a-million, almost as many as there were students in 1920.

But democratic restraint is not an absolute commitment. It describes a threshold, which in turn relates to level of provocation, level of desperation. Political extremism may be more difficult to make overt than it was in the 1920's, but the dynamic is always there, never expunged. Massive unmet aspirations on the Left—or, as has more often happened in America, unattended status backlash on the Right—can obviously overwhelm democratic restraint under certain conditions, and thus a major function of pragmatic politics in America has always been to prevent those conditions from prevailing. This is why the possibility of a more narrowly ideological national politics seems so ominous.

What Watergate suggests is that just such a withdrawal from cosmopolitan politics may be in store for America. The electorate in general has grown more cosmopolitan largely because of education, but education has also helped to create more ideological fervor at both ends of the political spectrum. According to a study by Everett Ladd, college-educated Democrats are more ideologically liberal and college-educated Republicans are more ideologically conservative than less educated party partisans. And abundant data indicate that well-educated ideologues are the most likely of all to be active in party affairs and to vote in primary elections. When the conservative ideologues captured the Republican party in 1964, the mass of Republicans was in effect disenfranchised, as was the mass of the Democratic electorate when the liberal ideologues captured their party in 1972. To imagine an entirely disenfranchised electorate, we need only imagine a Goldwater-McGovern contest for the Presidency. Watergate has now revealed that we were much closer to such a situation than many thought. McGovern, like Goldwater before him, lost by a landslide because he was seen as a factionalist, an extremist. Nixon, on the other hand, was perceived as a former factionalist who had turned into a pragmatist, a coalition leader, a cosmopolitan. To some extent, this was certainly true of Nixon, but we now know that the provincial, factional, ideological, extremist element in Nixon was also still alive, restrained by his cosmopolitan side but clearly not squelched.

If, then, American society, torn between provincialism and cosmopolitanism, indeed had an appointment with Watergate, it could scarcely have chosen a more likely person to keep that appointment than Richard M. Nixon. The corrolary is that if American society is to avoid backlash extremism in the future, it will have to find ways of preventing the disenfranchisement of the electorate by ideological factionalists, and of making the politics of pragmatism and democratic restraint prevail once again on the national scene.

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The Conversion of the Jews

Marshall Sklare

NOTHING, it would seem, ever goes away; and thus it was that American Jews, living in a society where interreligious friction has been reduced to a minimum and secularism is rampant, recently found themselves again rallying, as in former, less enlightened times, to oppose Christian conversionist efforts. The occasion was the latest resurgence of evangelist proselytizing in the United States—especially the movement known as Key 73, a coalition of 140 Protestant denominational groups and 40-some Roman Catholic dioceses, joined in a year-long campaign to "win the nation for Christ"—and it evoked a rare display of agreement on the part of organized American Jewry. Religious bodies, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, the major community-relations agencies (including those with active interreligious departments whose programmatic success depends on Christian good will)—all were unanimous in condemning the development and in calling for appropriate action to counter the renewed missionary advances.

This outpouring of concern—in some instances, outrage—should not have been surprising. Christian missionizing may not at present pose the greatest threat to American-Jewish survival—it can be argued that secular or political messianist movements have done more damage—but it does strike at the very heart of the Christian-Jewish relationship, reviving for Jews historical memories of the most painful kind. To be sure, American Christianity has in overwhelming part avoided the excesses of the pre-modern Church, but the persistence of missionary movements in the United States has nevertheless been seen as demeaning by American Jews, imputing a status of inequality that is contrary to the American ideal. For that reason, and despite the fact that American missionaries have been singularly unsuccessful in their conversion attempts—this, as we shall see, applies also to Key 73—Jews have never been able to treat the matter lightly.

Traditionally, of course, Jews have held the Jewish convert to Christianity in utter abhorrence.* Centuries of martyrdom are the price which the Jewish people has paid for survival, and the apostate, at one stroke, makes a mockery of Jewish history. But if the convert is contemptible in Jewish eyes, the missionary—all the more, the missionary of Jewish descent—is seen as pernicious, for he forces the Jew to relive the history of his martyrdom, all the while pressing the claim that in approaching the Jew he does so out of love. What kind of love is it, Jews wonder, that would deprive a man of his heritage? Furthermore, given the history of Christian treatment of the Jews, would it not seem time at last to recognize that the Jew has paid his dues and earned the right to be protected from obliteration by Christian love as well as destruction by Christian hate?

It is, moreover, because of the unhappy Jewish experience over the centuries in lands with established religions that American Jews have been among the staunchest defenders of the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. For Jews especially there has been no place in the American scheme of things—to cite the most egregious examples—for the snatching of Jewish children to be brought to the baptismal font, or the offering of inducements to young or gullible Jews. The majority of Americans may be Christians but America itself, Jews have told themselves confidently, is not a Christian nation;† no one faith is preeminent and the practice (or non-practice) of religion is altogether a private matter. It is a view which has found enthusiastic acceptance among the vast majority of American Jews, religious and secular; and the shared repugnance to Christian

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* As the late Maurice Samuel observed: "Perhaps the heaviest and deadliest Yiddish word is *shmad*, deriving from the Hebrew for 'destruction, wiping out,' and having the single meaning of 'apostasy, conversion from Judaism to another religion.' *Zikh shmadn* is to 'apostasize,' and a man who has done that is a *meshumed*, which etymologically would be a 'destroyed one,' but as used in living Yiddish implies something much more hateful than 'self-destruction.' The emotional charge in the word did not spring solely from religious intolerance. Mixed with it was the rage of an embattled minority made more of a minority with every defection; but there was an even stronger motivation. One of the characteristics of the *meshumed* has frequently been the zeal with which he becomes the assistant, or even the renewed inspiration, of the oppressed of his people" (*In Praise of Yiddish*, Cowles, 1971).

† However, on certain Protestant ideas of America as a Christian civilization, see Robert T. Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities* (Oxford University Press, 1971).

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evangelism has served to unite the most varied segments of the American-Jewish community.

All these sentiments, keenly felt, have generally gone unvoiced, except under the greatest provocation or by the most exceptional Jewish leaders, for the subject is an exceedingly sensitive one. It forces American religious groups into an unwanted candor with one another on questions whose discussion can generate both anger and fear. Small wonder, then, that American Jews have preferred to concentrate on other, less distressing, aspects of Jewish-Christian relations.

Nevertheless, from time to time American Jews have found it necessary to turn their attention to the question of missionizing. The problem has not been made any easier by the fact of the Jewish commitment to full freedom of religion and strict separation of church and state, a commitment which precludes the advocacy of any legal interference with Christian missionizing. However, there is one tactic that has seemed useful and efficacious, the public exposure of the unsavory character of much missionary work in order to undercut Christian support of the mission centers. Historically the most significant such effort was the Jewish-sponsored republication in the 1920's of a book by an ex-missionary named Samuel Freuder, *A Missionary's Return to Judaism: The Truth about the Christian Missions to the Jews.** Freuder's book came equipped with an introduction by no less an eminence than Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, at the time one of the foremost leaders of American Jewry and a prominent religious liberal.

Freuder had quite a tale to tell. A cantor's son, born in a Hungarian *shtetl*, he was something of a child prodigy. By the age of twelve he had exhausted the local scholarly resources, and was sent to the yeshiva in Pressburg, the home of his uncle, a rabbi. Before long young Freuder began to show signs of liberal tendencies and was packed off to the Hildesheimer Seminary in Berlin, but to no avail. Freuder then decided to start life anew in America as a businessman. Arriving in the United States in 1883, he made his way to Cincinnati, armed with a letter of introduction to a leading Jewish merchant, who made no offer of employment but did introduce him to Isaac Mayer Wise, the dean of American Reform Judaism. Impressed with the young man's yeshiva background, Wise persuaded Freuder to enroll at Hebrew Union College, where he was graduated in 1886. But as a rabbi he did not do well, and after being discharged from several rabbinical posts, he decided to leave the rabbinate and, subsequently, Judaism itself.

In 1891 Freuder was baptized at the Chicago Hebrew Mission and entered the Chicago Theological Seminary where he was ordained as a minister. Supported by the Congregational Church, Freuder started to missionize among Jews as well as to lecture extensively on Judaism before Christian audiences. Then one day—June 3, 1908—he was scheduled to deliver an address, "Christ in the Talmud," at a Hebrew-Christian conference meeting at the historic Park Street Church in Boston. To the consternation of his audience, Freuder proceeded to renounce Christianity, and also his missionary calling:

> The Jews stand for pure monotheism, but the Christian does not, for he has set up Christ as a divine object of worship, for which no authority is given in the Bible. How, then, shall Christianity lead a Jew to be a better man or lead a better life than he would if he had followed his mother instead of running away to his stepmother? . . . From this day forth I will never baptize a Jew or anyone else. If I ever preach in any Christian pulpit again may my right hand forget its cunning and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

Freuder was as good as his word; his subsequent career was devoted to an exposure of the Christian missions to the Jews. He told all in his book ("The whole missionary business as conducted by professional converts is steeped in dishonesty and trickery"), where he related tale after lurid tale of cupidity and guile. Missionaries, according to Freuder, made few Jewish converts, but in order to stay in business they engaged in all manner of shady practices.

Even in its own day, Freuder's book could scarcely have been an edifying document, yet the fact that responsible and respected Jewish leaders undertook to disseminate its message underscores the desperation of the Jewish response to the problem of missionizing. Still, on another and perhaps more important publishing front, American Jewry proved less than eager to move decisively. For decades textbooks on American-Jewish history had not a word to say on the subject of missionaries. Thus Lee J. Levinger in *A History of the Jew in America* (1930), the standard textbook for two generations of Reform, Conservative, and to some extent Orthodox youngsters, did not hesitate to discuss anti-Semitism but omitted any mention of Christian missionary activity among American Jews. The young reader was left to infer that such things as the notorious Mortara Affair simply could not happen in America.†

* The book was originally published by the Sinai Publishing Company in 1915; the third edition was published in 1924 by Bloch.

† In 1858, Edward Mortara, a six-year-old Jewish child, was seized by Papal guards who invaded the family home in Bologna (the boy had been secretly baptized by his Catholic nurse in infancy). The child was claimed by the Pope as his personal ward, was educated in Catholic schools, and subsequently became a priest. The Mortara Affair, as the whole episode came to be known, gave rise to widespread protest demonstrations in the United States which culminated in the establishment in 1859 of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites (see Bertram W. Korn, *The American Reaction to the Mortara Case,* American Jewish Archives, 1958).

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Recently a new educational openness to discussing the missionary problem has become evident in Jewish textbooks, as in general it has become more acceptable to hold critical views of American society and as courses in intergroup relations have begun to be introduced into the Jewish school curriculum. Now the question is one of approach: how to present the subject to students in such a way as to clarify Jewish antipathy to missionizing while at the same time not offending Christian sensibilities. (The issue is one of particular delicacy since the Jewish community-relations agencies have been active in stimulating research on the anti-Jewish content of Christian religious texts.) The solution that has evolved has been to contrast the Christian and Jewish views of missionizing but not to criticize Christianity directly. Thus, a recent textbook, *Judaism and Christianity: What We Believe*, by William B. Silverman,* emphasizes that Jews believe in "... one, universal God for all people and all nations" and that consequently Judaism believes that all men ". . . worship the same God in different ways." From this it follows that

> There are no Jewish missionary movements because Judaism does not seek to attract anyone away from his own faith. Judaism does not believe that a man or woman must embrace Judaism to be saved. Judaism claims that the righteous of all peoples, each clinging to the highest ethical ideals of his faith, are equal before God!

The author winds up the discussion by suggesting that if there is any necessity at all for missionary efforts, they should take place within, rather than between, the faith-communities. Christians and Jews need only cultivate their own vineyards in order to make their contributions to the spiritual life of the nation.

While Silverman's stress on cultivating one's own vineyard represents the regnant view of generations of American Jews, the fact of the matter is that American Christians have not always been so persuaded. Indeed, missionary activity directed at Jews goes back in America to Colonial times, when the Jewish community numbered a mere 2,000. The most notable conversion of the period took place in Boston in 1722, when Judah Monis, who was later appointed to the Harvard faculty as an instructor in Hebrew, embraced Christianity. Monis's conversion, although an isolated event, must be seen in the context of the Puritan ethos, in which the conversion of the Jews was regarded as a Christian necessity:

> Even though they did not go to the full lengths of the Fifth Monarchy Men, the Millenarians or the Judaisers, to the Puritan settlers of America in the 17th and 18th centuries the millennium was something very near and real which every day brought measurably nearer. To them it was possible for any living man not only to have a chance to partake in that great event but personally to hasten its coming. They accepted the words of prophecy literally that as soon as the Jews had been dispersed throughout every land of the earth, there was to be a calling of the Jewish nation and their conversion to Christianity, and then the millennium. It was a subject of active debate whether the conversion of the Jews was to be in the mass or whether individual Jews were to be converted until all had disappeared as Jews. Whichever view was adopted, to be the means of converting a Jew was not merely a matter of personal glory but another step accelerating the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.†

Nevertheless, it was not until 1816, with the arrival in the U.S. of a Jewish apostate, Joseph Simon Christian Frederick Frey by name, that organized missionary activity became a significant part of the American scene. Frey, whose original name was Joseph Simon Levi, was born in Franconia in 1770, and prior to his conversion in 1798 had served various communities as a Hebrew teacher, cantor, and *shochet* (ritual slaughterer). He received missionary training in Berlin, and then planned to pursue his calling in Africa. Detained in London while awaiting transportation to the Dark Continent, he decided that he would be more of an asset to the movement if he remained in England, spreading the gospel to the Jews. In due course, he founded the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among Jews, which soon gained widespread support among all levels of British society, including the aristocracy.

After some years, Frey decided to come to the United States—"where though inhabited comparatively by few of my Jewish brethren, yet the harvest is truly great and the labourers comparatively few, and where there is a much brighter prospect for the comfortable support of a growing family."** (The fact was that the London Society had dismissed Frey after he seduced the wife of Jacob Josephson, a convert under its protection.) Frey was indeed correct in assuming there would be considerable American interest in his specialty; in short order the American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews, which he promoted, grew to include two hundred branches from Maine to Georgia. Following the London pattern, leading citizens lent their names to the project, among them John Adams and John Quincy Adams. The Society went into decline by the time of the Civil War, but by then it had set the precedents that were to guide all future Christian-

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* Behrman House, 1968. The quotations are from the chapter entitled "Christian Missionaries and the Mission of Israel."

† Lee M. Friedman, "Cotton Mather and the Jews," *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*, XXVI (1918).

** Quoted in Lee M. Friedman, *The American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews and Joseph S. C. F. Frey Its Missionary* (Boston, 1925).

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Jewish missionary activity in the United States. These included the idea that the best way to approach Jews would be through Jewish converts; that it was justifiable to use Jewish-sounding titles in the literature, like that of the Society's periodical, *Israel's Advocate*; that the convert be given economic assistance; and that interim arrangements, such as special congregations, be devised until the new converts were assimilated into existing denominations.

For all his frenetic activity, Frey actually failed to make a single Jewish convert to Christianity. In the middle years of the 19th century, America's growing population of German Jews was far more interested in reforming Judaism than in becoming Christians. There were, of course, many instances of German Jews who left the fold and even converted, but this was in no way due to the efforts of the American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews. The upwardly mobile German Jews, rapidly entering the ranks of the middle class and beyond, did not avail themselves of Frey's services.

For a while, therefore, the missions lay dormant, but the mass influx of East European Jews, in the 1880's, brought about a renewal of activity and a new crop of missionaries of Jewish descent. The most prominent of these was Leopold Cohn, born in Berenza, Hungary, and a claimant to rabbinical ordination in Europe. After his conversion to Christianity Cohn became a Baptist minister and soon afterward, in 1894, he founded the American Board of Missions to the Jews, to become the most important of the so-called Hebrew-Christian groups.* By now there were missions in all of the Jewish immigrant neighborhoods across the land—New York's Lower East Side was dotted with them. These missions all sought to capitalize on the uncertainties of the immigrant situation, but despite their proliferation—from 1920-29, much after the peak of East European immigration, some twenty-five new centers were established—only a handful of Jewish immigrants or their children responded. East European Jews were more attracted to secular political and social movements than to the blandishments of religious messianism.

It was inevitable that sooner or later an inquiry by official Protestant bodies would be made into the effectiveness of the missions to the Jews. In 1939, in anticipation of a Protestant conference on Jewish evangelism to be held in Atlantic City, Charles H. Fahs, of Union Theological Seminary, was commissioned to do a study of the missions. He set about his task with considerable enterprise, collecting data from fifty-four Jewish mission centers, visiting many in person, and sending out scores of questionnaires to converts.† Fahs found that the missionaries used a wide variety of techniques to attract their quarry. They published and distributed vast quantities of literature, much of it consisting of Old Testament "proof texts"—that is, texts interpreted as prophesying the coming of Christ and as validating Christianity. They sponsored social clubs and recreational activities; maintained summer camps, schools, and medical dispensaries; made in excess of 100,000 home visits annually; approached hospitals and prisons; sponsored night schools for the study of English and classes for instruction in trades; and broadcast their message over the radio. The most common approach, Fahs discovered, was to play upon the Jewishness of the sought-for converts, seeking to persuade them that by becoming Christians they would, in effect, become better Jews.

Fahs was an experienced student of home missions and was therefore in a position to evaluate the quality of the effort. He concluded that Jewish missions were inferior to the general run of Protestant missions. Their personnel was substandard; talented Gentile missionaries were seldom attracted to the Jewish-mission field, and the training was inadequate. Fahs found none of the bribery or corruption which Freuder had exposed, but he felt that, despite their good intentions, the missionary centers were ineffective instruments for the accomplishment of their purpose. He came to the conclusion that the Jewish missionary effort was a failure, and though he made no specific proposals, Fahs left his sponsors with the clear inference that their funds might be spent to better advantage elsewhere.

The Fahs report came at a propitious moment. This was the time when the interfaith "good-will" movement, later to culminate in the establishment of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, was coming to the fore. "A good-will approach to the Jews seems to some of our people to be more in keeping with Christian ideals than an evangelistic approach which might be interpreted as proselytizing," one Protestant mission board had written to Fahs, in explanation of why it did not sponsor a Jewish mission. It was a notion in which Jews were bound to concur and, indeed, many Jewish leaders were eager to cooperate with the newly-founded Committee on Good-Will between Jews and Christians of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ. However, Jews wondered, did the development represent a genuine shift in Christian sentiment, or was it just another, albeit more sophisticated, missionary effort?

* On the phenomenon of Hebrew Christians, see Ira O. Glick, "The Hebrew Christians: A Marginal Religious Group," in *The Jews: Social Patterns of an American Group*, edited by Marshall Sklare (Free Press, 1958); and B. Z. Sobel, "Legitimation and Anti-Semitism as Factors in the Functioning of a Hebrew Christian Mission," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 23 (1967). See also Harry Golden, "Hebrew-Christian Evangelist: Southern Style," COMMENTARY, December 1950.

† The report was never published, but the results have been summarized by Max Eisen in an article, "Christian Missions to the Jews in North America and Great Britain," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 10 (1948).

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As WITH all Jewish issues of the time, the question was referred to Louis Marshall, the formidable head of the American Jewish Committee. Marshall decided in favor of the good-will movement, despite the fact that, in addition to its liberal contingent, the Committee on Good-Will also harbored some diehard traditionalists who would not give up the idea of converting the Jews. One of these was the Reverend Alfred Williams Anthony (a founder of the group and its chairman for a time), and Marshall entered into a lengthy correspondence with him, portions of which were published in the Jewish establishment's journal of the time, the *American Hebrew*.* It was a remarkable exchange and is worth quoting in some detail.

Marshall was particularly incensed at Anthony's claim that exempting Jews from conversion efforts would constitute a form of discrimination. The reverend had written:

> . . . most Christians believe that it is their duty to preach the Gospel, and many of them believe that this means the form of Gospel which they believe in, and that consequently they must preach to others, even to other Christians, and seek to convert them to their way of thinking. Christians really are busily engaged in trying to convert Christians, and are specially engaged in trying to convert all men. Do the Jews wish to have Christians discriminate against them and say, "We have no interest in Jews?" Is such discrimination desirable? Does good-will lie distinctly in that realm? To many Christians such an attitude would mean abandoning Jews to what they would call a "lost" condition, with all the unfavorable implications attached to their theology. I raise the question whether Jews have thought out all the implications of such a policy, and really wish the Christians to adopt it? For certainly in such a policy are some implications very unfavorable to Jews.

To which Marshall indignantly replied:

> Your argument is that, when Jews rebel against interference with their most sacred right, that of religious liberty, when Jewish parents seek to protect their children, for whose moral and ethical life they feel a serious responsibility, against the intrusion and trespasses of conversionists, it is the Jews who are interfering with religious liberty, because, forsooth! they are undertaking "to muzzle Christians" and are interfering with free speech. I could scarcely believe the evidence of my own eyes when first I beheld these words in your communication. According to your notion, any conversionist may button-hole me in the street and proceed in his efforts to convert me to his religion. If I refuse to listen and bid him to attend to his own affairs, I am interfering with freedom of speech and am guilty of applying a muzzle. I may not even protect my children or grandchildren against such intrusion.

Anthony was willing to concede some points. "I am confident," he had written, "that Christians as a whole emphatically object to improper methods of proclaiming religious views, and in saying this acknowledge that Christians have used, and still use, improper methods in many places in the advocacy of their doctrine." But Marshall would have none of this:

> It seems to be your idea that it shall be recognized as a fundamental right of Christians to enter a Jewish household and to take the children to Christian schools. If you remember the Mortara case you are aware of the fact that there were Christians who carried your theory still further. . . . You "acknowledge that Christians have used and still do use, improper methods. . . ." This probably refers to the policies of physical extermination and moral degradation. They have caused untold misery but have not worked, so they are regarded for these days as rather too crude, although 200,000 Jews were massacred in the Ukraine during the present decade. The policy which you advocate is more gentle. It is the employment of the honeyed words of the conversionist. That means to us spiritual annihilation. For the greatest treasure that we possess—our sacred religion, preserved through nearly thirty centuries of unparalleled persecution, oppression, and barbarities—is to be taken from us and to be exchanged, for what? Paulinianism, with all that it implies—the faith of our persecutors. You are entirely frank about it. But why speak of good-will? How can there be good-will "with reservations"? If you have your way good-will toward the Jews would be a mere catch-word, a beautiful figure of speech—for there would be no Jews left. They would be swallowed up by your religion. And then what? *O, sancta simplicitas!*

Marshall's attack had its effect. While Anthony was not forced to resign from the Committee on Good-Will, the secretary of the group, Everett R. Clinchy (later to become the director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews), stated publicly that Anthony's ideas on proselytizing did not represent the Committee's views on the subject.

HOWEVER, the victory was far from complete. Still to be achieved was a wider understanding of the Jewish position vis-à-vis Christianity beyond the limited circles of the good-will movement. This was not to come about until the 1950's, after a great war had been fought and the Jewish people had undergone one of its profoundest tragedies. America was now entering a new pluralistic age in which Christian triumphalism had no place and in the emerging climate of ecumenicism, missionaries represented a type of spiritual arrogance inimical to unity.

These notions were given striking formulation

* In the issue of June 28, 1929, under the title "Good-Will between Jews and Christians, and Proselytism; Interchange of Views between Louis Marshall, Esq., President of the American Jewish Committee, and Rev. Dr. Alfred Williams Anthony."

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by the late Abraham Joshua Heschel, whose charismatic presence and eloquent writings on Jewish thought were beginning to have a deep influence on Jews and non-Jews alike. Heschel dedicated himself to the task of convincing Christians that missionary efforts directed at Jews should be discontinued at all levels, and to this end he engaged in a series of extensive negotiations with Christian leaders. The closing of the missions, he argued, would represent the first step in the spiritual rehabilitation of Christians with respect to their Jewish brothers. Such an act would also be salutary inasmuch as it would constitute an acknowledgment of the Jewish contribution to Christianity:

> A Christian ought to ponder seriously the tremendous implications of a process begun in early Christian history. I mean the conscious or unconscious dejudaization of Christianity, affecting the Church's way of thinking, its inner life as well as its relationship to the past and present reality of Israel—the father and the mother of the very being of Christianity. The children did not arise to call the mother blessed; instead they called the mother blind. Some theologians continue to act as if they did not know the meaning of "honor your father and mother"; others, anxious to prove the superiority of the Church, speak as if they suffered from a spiritual Oedipus complex.*

Christians, he stressed, ought to realize that a world without the people of Israel would be a world without the God of Israel, and hence one more vulnerable to paganism. Would such a world really be to the advantage of Christians?

Heschel's appeal struck a greater chord of response among Catholics than among Protestants, who hewed more closely to the doctrine that the Second Coming made the conversion of the Jews mandatory. He carried his campaign throughout the entire Catholic community and even to the Vatican itself, pressing, along with representatives of the Jewish intergroup-relations agencies, for a favorable statement on the Jews from the Ecumenical Council, Vatican II, then meeting in Rome. The statement, which came to be known as the Schema on the Jews, was indeed forthcoming after protracted negotiations,† and though it failed to condemn what Heschel called the "demonic canard of deicide," it was hailed by the Jewish community as an important milestone in Catholic-Jewish relations, ushering in a new era of "fraternal dialogues," in the phrase of the Schema. Perhaps its most gratifying feature was the absence of any plea for mass proselytizing efforts. As Heschel noted:

> The Schema on the Jews is the first statement of the Church in history—the first Christian discourse dealing with Judaism—which is devoid of any expression of hope for conversion. This is one of the reasons why I consider this particular Schema to be of great importance in the history of Jewish-Christian relations. . . .**

Though Heschel, as noted, was less successful in getting his message across to the Protestants, he did gain one powerful Protestant ally, Reinhold Niebuhr, during his time the most distinguished member of the faculty of Union Theological Seminary. Niebuhr engaged in a thoroughgoing rethinking of the Jewish-Christian symbiosis, and came to believe that, unwelcome as this might be to Christians, they would have to accept the reality of Jewish resistance to Christian messianism. In Niebuhr's view it was the Christian destiny not to convert the Jews but to carry the Jewish prophetic message to the Gentile world; the attempt to proselytize the Jews not only constituted a diversion from the true mission of Christianity but also had a deleterious effect on the Christian's understanding of his own religion. For Niebuhr, missionary activity was ineffective and dangerous as well, constituting theological error at best and at worst justifying persecutions which made a mockery of Christian love.

NIEBUHR'S views, first expressed at a lecture before a joint faculty meeting of the Jewish Theological Seminary and Union Theological Seminary, were later printed in the journal of the Central Conference of American Rabbis,†† and had a profound effect on the American-Jewish community. On Niebuhr's fellow Christians the effect was of a different order. His revolutionary restatement of the Protestant position on missionizing evoked an indignant rebuttal (published in the *Christian Century*, the leading Protestant journal) by the Reverend George F. Sweazey, chairman of the General Council of the Presbyterian Church.*** Sweazey argued that for Protestants to retreat on the missionary question meant surrendering a central point of the Christian doctrine requiring that all men be brought to Christ; for Jews to be exempted would be tantamount to conceding that salvation was possible outside of Christianity.

If normative Protestantism as represented by Sweazey was unwilling to budge on points of doctrine, the fact of the matter was that by the 1950's and early 1960's Jewish missionizing had become an increasingly esoteric activity; the few Christian groups still active in the field were to be

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* Abraham J. Heschel, "From Mission to Dialogue?," *Conservative Judaism*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Spring 1967). The article incorporates portions of Heschel's inaugural address at Union Theological Seminary where he served as Harry Emerson Fosdick Visiting Professor in 1965-66.

† See Judith Hershcopf, "The Church and the Jews: The Struggle at Vatican Council II," *American Jewish Year Book 1966*, Vol. 67. See also, "Vatican II and the Jews," by F. E. Cartus, COMMENTARY, January 1965.

** Heschel, *op. cit.*

†† Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Relations of Christians and Jews in Western Civilization," *CCAR Journal*, April 1958.

*** "Are Jews Intended to Be Christians?," *Christian Century*, April 29, 1959.

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found only among fundamentalist sects. The mainstream Christian denomination were willing to live with the thesis then becoming popular—and reflected in the title of Will Herberg's influential book of the period, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew* (1955)—that American society was comprised of three major faith-communities, each making a contribution to American society.

These years were the golden age of dialogue. Conferences, institutes, colloquia, brotherhood weeks, interfaith services proliferated. For all practical purposes it seemed that Jewish fears of missionizing were being laid to rest at last and that Jews and Christians could now meet on an equal footing. To be sure, there were Orthodox Jews who continued to maintain that the dialogues were merely a cover for conversionist impulses, and that dialogue was objectionable from the vantage-point of Jewish law. Moreover, they contended that in the light of the Holocaust dialogue with Christians was theologically untenable and must await a prolonged period of Christian testing. But such Jews were in a minority. Joint Christian-Jewish efforts proceeded apace, particularly as the civil-rights movement, with its opportunities for "social witness," gathered momentum. Perhaps the climax of this heady period, marking the end of the traditional hostility between the two faiths, occurred on Sunday, November 13, 1966, when the American Jewish Committee feted the American delegates who had returned from Vatican II.

The Middle East crisis of spring 1967 and the ensuing Six-Day War delivered a jolt to the spirit of brotherhood, as Jews discovered to their dismay that there were important Christian spokesmen who were decidedly unfriendly to Israel's cause. Several leading churchmen, during the tense weeks of May and June 1967, remained silent; others betrayed a pro-Arab bias. The Jewish reaction to all this was one of bafflement and hurt. Many Jews felt that participation in the process of dialogue had been a colossal blunder and that further indulgence would not only be futile but would also indicate a lack of self-respect. On the other hand, there were those who felt that the particular letdown was further reason for continuing the dialogue, that to break off now would be to endanger a hard-won victory.

THE dialogue resumed; but just as the effects of 1967 were beginning to dissipate, the Jewish community, to its great surprise, found itself confronted by what it had assumed had become an anachronism—an organized missionary campaign directed at Jews. In its latest manifestation, the activity assumed double form, Key 73 and the movement known as Jews for Jesus, a latter-day offshoot of Leopold Cohn's American Board of Missions to the Jews.

The Jews for Jesus movement could be seen as part of the general Jesus phenomenon—variously known as the Jesus Freaks, the Jesus Movement, or Jesus People—that had emerged (via routes too complicated to trace here) from the counter-culture. However, the unexpected resurgence of a group like Jews for Jesus also served to remind Jews that the organization which Leopold Cohn had founded in 1894 was still very much alive. As for Key 73, which set out to "win the nation for Christ," this movement seemed to be saying, to Jews and others, that America should be defined as a Christian nation. Further, Key 73 was not some obscure storefront endeavor but a large-scale evangelical effort on an unprecedented national scale, with important backing from major Protestant bodies.

The Jewish architects of interreligious accord were taken aback by these developments. They viewed Key 73 as a breach of contract, a violation of the understandings that had been so painfully arrived at in the 1950's. Rabbi Solomon S. Bernards, director of the Department of Interreligious Cooperation of the Anti-Defamation League, expressed the general disappointment:

> All of this threatens a setback for the Jewish-Christian conversation—an enterprise based on mutual respect and trust. Already those sectors of the Jewish community which have been suspicious of Jewish-Christian dialogue from the start are beginning to assert that their suspicions have proved well founded—that the nice things Christians have said to Jews during the past few years were a calculated process intended to "soften up" Jews for the baptismal font. I hope responsible Christian leaders will allay these suspicions by repudiating the effort of Key 73—or for that matter any future evangelical campaign—to proselytize Jews.*

GIVEN the wide scope of the Key 73 movement and the broad extent of its ecclesiastical support, the Jewish community, as a matter of tactical procedure, decided to oppose the developments not on the issue of Christian triumphalism but rather on the question of the unseemliness of evangelizing the Jews (on the grounds that Reinhold Niebuhr had elaborated a decade before). However, it soon became clear that there was little chance of persuading the officials of Key 73 to accept the view that the Jewish covenant was as valid as the Christian and hence that Jews had no need of conversion. Indeed, the national officials of Key 73 were quite unyielding to Jewish entreaties and inquiries and in effect warned that Jews had no right to interfere with the activities of Christian evangelism.

To some Jewish leaders, the Reverend Billy Graham was the one person who might save the situation from further deterioration, and he was approached on the question by the American Jew-

* Solomon S. Bernards, "Key 73—A Jewish View," *Christian Century*, January 3, 1973.

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ish Committee in March 1973.* Graham issued a characteristically friendly statement after the meeting, affirming his regard for Jews and expressing his sympathies with the Jewish concern. "I understood," he noted, "that it is the purpose of Key 73 to call men to Christ without singling out any specific religious or ethnic group." He would not, however, give any specific assurance that Jews would be exempt from the advances of Key 73, though he did promise that no "gimmicks, coercion ... intimidation" would be used to induce Jews to become Christians. A *Newsweek* report on the meeting concluded thus:

> Any change in [Graham's] attitude toward converting Jews would certainly affect morale within the crusade. "Billy would never accept a two-covenant theory," insists the Rev. John Streeter, a close friend of Graham and the Baptist head of Key 73 operations in the San Francisco area. "A Jew is just like everyone else. If he does not accept Jesus as his savior, he cannot be right with God."†

So, after forty years of good will and dialogue, to the Christian evangelist Jews were still "like everyone else."

If some Key 73 heads were adamant, and if Billy Graham was statesmanlike but noncommital, Jewish leaders found that there were local Key 73 officials more responsive to Jewish sensibilities. Thus the executive committee of the Key 73 Task Force of the Southern California-Arizona Conference of the United Methodist Church disavowed "... any efforts on the part of the Christian groups to convert Jews or those of other religious traditions." In Florida, the local Key 73 director, the Reverend Charles L. Eastman, wrote a letter to the rabbis in the Miami area in which he stated: "I, for one, do not consider Jews as 'unchurched.' It is my understanding that the other three ministers [in North Miami] do not consider the Jews as a target for Key 73 either." In Illinois, the chairman of the Chicago-area campaign, the Reverend Henry W. Andersen, pronounced: "Jews are already God's people. God chose them and in His wisdom called them to be His people, and I accept that. I just leave the Jews to God." Such statements were especially forthcoming in communities where there was Catholic cooperation with what was essentially a Protestant-directed crusade. The evangelist tone of the movement was foreign to many Catholics, and in any case they sought to avoid what might be considered a repetition of medieval practice. Thus they were readily agreeable to bringing pressure on the Protestants directing the campaign. (In Detroit, for instance, the Key 73 coordinating committee was forced to produce a statement allaying Jewish fears of harassment after the archdiocesan representative threatened to withdraw.)

At the same time, however, there were disturbing reports. Young Jews, it was learned, were being continuously approached by evangelists intent on preaching the Key 73 message. Moving through college dormitories, the Key 73 representatives went from door to door, the less fastidious seeking to gain access to students' rooms on the pretext of conducting an experiment or making a survey. On some campuses the Hillel Foundations were forced to seek aid from university officials in the form of statements assuring students the right to privacy and forbidding door-to-door proselytizing or solicitation of any kind. There was also a rash of incidents in high schools, particularly those with low Jewish enrollments. The Campus Crusade for Christ and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes induced some principals to allow them into their schools. The usual procedure was to hold an assembly—in contravention of the principle of separation of church and state—where students were compelled to listen to an evangelistic appeal.

If Key 73 officials in some instances proved sensitive to Jewish concerns, the same could not be said of the Hebrew-Christian groups (including Jews for Jesus). As time passed, these groups became increasingly aggressive in their behavior, stressing their Jewish identity more strongly than ever before, and hammering at the theme that one could be a Christian and a Jew simultaneously. They began to display Jewish symbols, such as prayershawls and skullcaps, and to indulge in public observance (in their own fashion) of Jewish holidays. The Hebrew Christians also began to affirm support of such Jewish causes as Soviet Jewry and Israel. Thus, when the Hebrew Christians for the first time made their presence publicly known in Miami, in December 1972, they did so at a "Hanukkah celebration" at the Miami Beach auditorium. They connected the event, which concluded with a call to the audience to decide for Christ, with the celebration of Israel's twenty-fifth anniversary. In other places, Hebrew Christians sponsored "Day of Atonement" services on Yom Kippur.

Altogether, the level of missionary sophistication had risen since the days when Charles Fahs conducted his survey. For instance, the American Board of Missions to the Jews was making effective use of television, preferring that medium to the traditional leaflets and tracts. In 1971 the Board produced a TV film entitled, "The Passover." The film, according to one commentator,

* Because his participation in a leadership capacity in Key 73 would have precluded the cooperation of important mainstream Protestant groups, Graham did not serve as chairman of the Key 73 campaign. The Jewish hope of winning his cooperation was apparently based on Graham's reputation for religious statesmanship. In his many crusades, he had carefully avoided denigrating non-Christian groups and, unlike other evangelists, he had never been known to place any special emphasis on converting Jews.

† March 19, 1973.

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was professionally produced and contained no reference to missions in general or the American Board of Missions to the Jews in particular, but the theme it unfolded was clear. . . . A Christian Jewish "family," composed of persons from ABMJ Beth Sar Shalom in Los Angeles, partook of the Passover Seder and enacted the ancient festival in precise adherence to the Old Testament detail. In the program there was no reference to missions, no appeal for funds. The program concluded by offering (free) *Israel: A Modern Miracle,* a 48-page pamphlet with a color photo of the Wailing Wall on the front cover and photographs of present-day Israel and narratives of fulfillment of Scriptural prophecy inside.*

Many Jews found the program objectionable and protested its showing. But perhaps even more offensive was the Board's series of newspaper advertisements, the best known of which appeared on a full page in the New York *Times* (December 10, 1971), with the caption, "So Many Jews Are Wearing 'That Smile' Nowadays!" It featured a striking photograph of a massed group of neatly-dressed, respectable-looking individuals, all smiling. The well-written text worked some original and, for Jews, disturbing variations on the old missionary themes:

> . . . it is not uncommon at all these days to find many Jewish men and women and children acknowledging the Great Jew [Jesus Christ] as the Messiah.
>
> In doing so, we are not giving up being Jews, we are in fact adding a beautiful dimension to being Jewish. Becoming more so. And the Christian church is being enriched by adding Jewish Christians . . . as Jews, and not causing us to assimilate. . . .

To counter all this activity the American-Jewish community, for the first time in its history, mounted and is still pursuing an organized anti-missionary campaign, a procedure altogether different from the random responses of a Louis Marshall or a Stephen S. Wise, and a total departure from the usual policy of silence on the matter. Thus there were set up, under community auspices, telephone "hot lines," where Jews could get information and counsel on how to deal with the missionaries, and "rap sessions" for Jewish young people. The three wings of American Judaism began turning out a body of anti-missionary literature, an endeavor in which their youth affiliates were especially active. (This being the age of "alternate life-styles" and a still-flourishing counter-culture, it was feared that young Jews, many of whom were already involved with various deviant experimentations, might be more than usually receptive to the lures of Key 73 and Jews for Jesus.)

Perhaps the most elaborate of the new publications was *The Missionary at the Door—Our Uniqueness,* prepared by Rabbi Benjamin Segal for the Youth Commission of the United Synagogue, an arm of the Conservative movement.† The booklet contains an analysis of typical missionary themes, an explanation of "proof texts," and suggestions on how to respond when approached by a missionary. Other materials were prepared and collected by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform) and distributed to its various affiliates. On the Orthodox side, the Lubavitcher movement was and continues to be particularly active in anti-missionary activity, including the distribution of literature. All in all, this literature looks to become an ongoing feature of the American-Jewish educational scene.

By the summer of 1973, much of the dust had settled and the American-Jewish community was able to engage in an assessment of the effects of the evangelical furor. It appeared that the worst fears had not materialized. Christian-Jewish relations for the greater part had continued in their accustomed course despite the new flurry of missionary activity. Key 73 had failed to make any significant breach in the wall between church and state. While numerous incidents of coercion and deception had occurred, these had been disavowed by the mainstream church bodies and steps taken to prevent a repetition. No statistics were available on the number of Jews who had been converted or who had been in some other way influenced by Key 73, but it did not appear as if the impact had been as serious as originally feared. Some Jews even began to claim that Key 73 had done more good than harm in that it had highlighted the need for more intensive Jewish education and improved community services to Jewish youth.

Thus, at a meeting in June 1973 of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC), the coordinating body of major and local Jewish community-relations agencies, a policy statement adopted by the delegates noted that concerns on the part of the American-Jewish community that its relations with Christian denominations might be adversely affected by the "aggressive missionizing intent" of Key 73 "appear to have abated." American Jewry, the statement seemed to be saying, could now forget about missionizing and return to the more familiar, less sensitive aspects of Jewish-Christian relations.

Given the human temptation to see a silver lining in every cloud, it is perhaps understandable that American Jews should seek to put the best possible face on the confrontation with Christian evangelism through which they have just passed. But there is no denying that the experience has been a sobering one. The kind of Christianity represented by Key 73 has forced

* Wesley Pippert, "Jews with a Smile," *Christian Life,* April 1972.

† The booklet is accompanied by a discussion guide, also available from the Youth Commision, United Synagogue of America, 1973.

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Jews to consider, whether they admit it or not, that a time may yet come when Jews will have to resign themselves to an acceptance of a "traditional" Christianity that retains its links with the past, which cannot be remade in the image of a Heschel or a Niebuhr to accommodate Jewish feelings and necessities, but which can, nonetheless, arrive at an honorable *modus vivendi* with Judaism.

THAT this may indeed be the case was put to the Jewish community, with considerable delicacy but also with considerable frankness, by Dr. David R. Hunter of the National Council of Churches of Christ, in an address before the above-mentioned NJCRAC conference. Hunter began boldly by stating that evangelizing was an inescapable part of the American heritage ". . . since our nation has always been predominantly Christian in its religious affiliation." Both Protestants and Catholics, he averred, ". . . have always taken seriously, with whatever emendations and qualifications, the Great Commission to 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.'" However, Key 73, he admitted, had raised serious questions about the propriety of certain kinds of evangelizing. What was therefore needed was a set of guidelines which could be used to judge the legitimacy of any given missionizing effort.

Hunter's first guideline indicated how far some mainstream Christians had come in their desire for détente and ultimately rapprochement with Jews. The guideline was what Hunter called the acceptance by Christians of "the living reality of the Covenant Jews have with God." In practical terms, this would mean that any conversionist effort which diminished or obscured Judaism was objectionable. Christianity's proper stance to Judaism, according to Hunter, was to be found in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where the Church is likened to "wild branches grafted onto the live olive tree of Israel."

A second guideline was the twofold constitutional guarantee of the free exercise of religion and protection from the establishment of a state religion. The constitutional guarantee is a precious part of the American heritage, Hunter asserted, one whose wisdom was readily apparent when contrasted with the unfortunate experience of lands with state religions, past and present (among his examples, he cited Israel). The third guideline was pluralism, the famous American diversity-within-unity. Evangelism, Hunter stressed, must not become a force to reduce or to minimize the pluralist ideal.

But for all that, in the final analysis Hunter maintained that Christians were still under the obligation to proclaim ". . . the Good News which came to man through the revelation of God to the Jew, Jesus of Nazareth. . . . For Christians this Good News has the feeling-tone of the act of God manifested in the Sinai Covenant with the Hebrews." To be sure, the proclamation of the Good News must be done tactfully. Hunter condemned ". . . the daily hounding of Jews on campuses at the hands of zealous Christians" and termed such behavior ". . . an infringement of human rights and a violation of Christian doctrine of love." Christians, said Hunter, must never forget ". . . the traumatic history of the sufferings of the Jewish people at the hands of Christians, sometimes in the name of conversion and at other times as an act of acknowledged genocide." This awareness must result in making Christians observe restraint in any evangelistic approach to Jews. Yet such understanding, Hunter concluded, must be a two-way street, and Jews for their part would have to surrender their "temptation" to deny a religious group the right to evangelize. In sum, what Hunter was really saying was that his guidelines for Christians would not work unless Jews were prepared to concede the legitimacy of the attempt to convert them.

Hunter's ultimate position is not bound to win enthusiastic endorsement from all segments of American Jewry. Certainly, it will not gain the approval of those who have labored long years at "dialogue" nor of those who hold to a utopian vision of a dramatic restructuring of Christian doctrines toward Judaism, and thus ultimately of Christianity itself. Nevertheless, Hunter's blueprint for achieving a balance between Christian tradition and Jewish rights should prove acceptable to some Jews. His vision of America is not the heavenly city of which some Jews have dreamed, but it does provide them with the possibility of a meaningful and dignified existence, of rearing their children in a culture where religion maintains its importance but where Jews are protected from evangelistic excess. The acceptance of Hunter's position, at its root, means that Jews must make their compromise with Gentile-Christian America. And this, perhaps, is the real lesson to be learned from Key 73, its antecedents, and all its attendant events.

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The New Egalitarianism and the Old

Charles Frankel

WHEN I was an undergraduate in the 30's, we used to hoot at yokels who said that socialism meant that everyone would have the same income. Some of us were socialists, some weren't, but we knew the difference, we thought, between "scientific" and "utopian" socialism, and didn't suppose that the cure for America's problems consisted in organizing it like a kibbutz.

All of us, of course, were in favor of equality, and thought there were inexcusable inequalities in American life. Some people, to start with, were just too poor: they didn't have enough to eat. And beyond that, immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, and from the Orient, were discriminated against; blacks, Jews, Irish, Italians didn't get jobs in the best law firms, banks, hospitals, universities; the children of workers, farmers, and the lower-middle classes didn't get a chance, most of them, to go to college unless they were lucky enough to live close to free municipal colleges. But our ideal of a just situation was simply one in which the obstacles to one's ascent, if one wanted to ascend, weren't rigid, and in which, though Jones might work for Smith all day, Jones chaired the political meeting which Smith attended in the evening. We weren't against ranking people; we were against ranking them rigidly in the same serial order in all circumstances of life. Simply put, we didn't want people born into categories within which they were boxed for life. We didn't suppose, however, that equality meant uniformity, and when anybody tried to say that it did we treated it as a cheap conservative canard—the kind of thing with which writers like Mencken frightened the booboisie.

The world has changed, or at least the university scene, as is illustrated by the sad story of what happened to Professor Richard Herrnstein of Harvard when he published an article in the *Atlantic Monthly*.* He there delivered himself of a syllogism: "If differences in mental abilities are inherited, and if success requires these abilities, and if earnings and prestige depend on success, then social standing will be based to some extent on inherited differences among people." Professor Herrnstein merely said "to some extent," the data on which his article was based were drawn entirely from the study of whites, and the syllogism was sprinkled with "ifs," but the sky fell in on him just the same. He was called a racist, elitist, and defender of human exploitation, and mobs have prevented him from speaking on a number of campuses.

The premise on which the most enthusiastic criticism of him is based is arresting. It is not that he was naive to take the model of a pure and efficient meritocracy so seriously as a factual possibility; nor is it that he showed more confidence than justified in the possibility of separating genetic from environmental factors in the determination of intelligence. It is that he made a mistake in social philosophy. He assumed that social stratification is inevitable, and that if it is based on ability it is fair. His Harvard colleague, F. C. Kafatos, professor of biology, said what he thought of this in the *Harvard Crimson*:

> In the long term, Herrnstein's syllogism is relevant. But incorrect. Because, by premise, its vision is utterly limited to a society based on competition, "built around human inequalities." . . . Herrnstein can only visualize social organization in terms of a "social ladder." What if the next step in human evolution is a "social net" instead, an organization based on cooperation and altruism rather than a struggle for individual survival? What if we can build a society which emphasizes human diversity and not inequality, a classless society which appreciates all aspects of the human experience?

This idea of a noncompetitive appreciativeness toward all aspects of the human experience has had a variety of practical applications. Bill Moyers, in *Listening to America*, quotes the president of Antioch College as saying that if we really practice cultural pluralism we have to recognize that there are class differences in morality: whereas a middle-class person tries to avoid personal violence, a boy in the slums "confirms his morality by beating the hell out of somebody." This means,

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* September 1971. See also his article, "On Challenging an Orthodoxy," in the April 1973 COMMENTARY.

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says the college president, that "you've got a real problem under these circumstances in trying to define what's crime." Another example is the emergent philosophy of "open admissions." Time was when open admissions were conceived as a device for giving people a second chance, for enabling them to continue their education, and for finding talent smothered by bad primary and secondary education. No longer. In the minds of its more earnest supporters, it is now something much more ambitious—an open and unembarrassed assault on any institutions that have selective admissions policies.

Writing in the May 1972 issue of *Change*, Jerome Karabel, described as "a researcher for the American Council on Education," says:

> The first skirmish for open admissions, the fight to provide a place for all high-school graduates at some type of college, is waning, and the egalitarians seem to have won. . . . So the next item on the agenda is open admissions at currently selective colleges. The open-admissions movement has laid bare the political nature of deciding who shall be educated in a society which distributes its rewards through the educational system. . . . It has demonstrated that higher education, far from being an equalizing force, accentuates existing differences of background and ability. Finally, it has provided a philosophical basis for countering the ingrained elitism which holds that the higher education system should give special attention to the academically adept and ignore the less able.

Mr. Karabel thinks statements in defense of academic standards to be inherently anti-democratic. "'The ideology of academic standards brilliantly reconciles two conflicting American values: equality and equality of opportunity." Mr. Karabel doesn't think they can be reconciled, and, in the crunch, he opts for equality. A similar view has been adopted by Christopher Jencks and others: if, after standards are set, some people do better than others, change the standards; or at least, as Mr. Jencks suggests in his much publicized study of the relation of education to social equality, change the rewards and redistribute income to level differences off. Success or failure, he believes, is pretty much a matter of luck in any case, and the least a humane society can do for its members is to refuse to punish them invidiously for losing.

A new egalitarianism, in sum, is challenging an older and more familiar kind. The older kind I would call "corrective egalitarianism." The newer kind I would call "redemptive egalitarianism." At bottom it represents, I suggest, the transference of supernaturalistic perspectives to secular political problems.

II

Fortunately, we now have a book which allows us to study and appraise "redemptive egalitarianism" in its full philosophic form. It is John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*.* The attention the book has commanded is further evidence, if such is needed, that this form of egalitarianism strikes a deep and responsive vein in contemporary academic culture. No book in English has received more philosophical acclaim in the years since World War II, and it has won attention and admiration as well from economists, political scientists, lawyers, and students of jurisprudence. Plainly, the book is an event. Nor are the reasons hard to see. Although the book's exposition is convoluted, and although Mr. Rawls seems quite often simply to be trying to explain things to himself, for he makes little effort to formulate the questions that would be in his readers' minds and makes no compromise with the readers' powers of attention to minor points, it is, unchallengeably, a highly accomplished piece of philosophical argumentation. The professional competence of its author shines on every page. The majesty of its theme—social justice—and the dedication and humanity with which Mr. Rawls grapples with it are compelling. And the author's purpose—which is nothing less than to overturn two centuries of empirical, utilitarian, and positivistic philosophies and to produce a work in moral thought that goes back to Natural Law and social-contract theory, just as if David Hume had never lived—is breathtaking.

But it is something else—the mixture of three superficially disparate things—which most powerfully explains, I believe, the book's success. It employs highly sophisticated techniques of contemporary philosophy, economics, and decision-theory. Its fundamental ideas, nevertheless, are profoundly conservative, antedating Hegel, Marx, Freud, and the theory of evolution. And it uses this combination of new-fashioned intellectual machinery and old-fashioned moral wisdom to give support to a political point of view currently in the ascendant in avant-garde circles. Mr. Rawls concedes that, inevitably, his reasoning is "highly intuitive throughout," but he seeks to develop "a kind of moral geometry with all the rigor which this name connotes." His purpose, as he says, is to "set up an Archimedean point for assessing the social system without invoking *a priori* considerations," or, for that matter, even considering the "existing wants and interests" of the people concerned. From this Archimedean point, as it turns out, the view that wins is one that flourishes these days in Cambridge, Massachusetts. What John Locke did for private property in the 17th century Mr. Rawls has done for the redemptive theory of equality in the 20th.

I shall make no attempt to summarize all the issues that Mr. Rawls's wide-ranging book covers or to examine his basic theses regarding the general theory of justice. I shall concentrate on

* Harvard University Press (1971), 607 pp., $15.00; also available in paperback ($3.95).

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what he has to say about equality, for no one, surely, has worked harder or, probably, succeeded better, in stating the basic rationale for the new egalitarianism. Mr. Rawls's position, to put it briefly, is that, whenever there are inequalities in society, these are justifiable if and only if they are to the long-term benefit of the least favored members of society. The general notion—held by people in many different moral traditions—that those who are better placed and educated owe it to others to be useful is not enough for Mr. Rawls. The question is to whom to be useful, and, in his belief, the person to be served is the individual who is worst off in the community.

This is what lies behind Mr. Rawls's distinction between what he calls the "liberal" and the "democratic" conceptions of equality. The "liberal" conception of equality combines a belief in careers open to talent with a principle of fair competition.

> Assuming that there is a distribution of natural assets, those who are at the same level of talent and ability, and have the same willingness to use them, should have the same prospects of success regardless of their initial place in the social system, that is, irrespective of the income class into which they are born.

But "intuitively," Mr. Rawls says, the liberal conception appears defective:

> For one thing, even if it works to perfection in eliminating the influence of social contingencies, it still permits the distribution of wealth and income to be distributed by the natural distribution of abilities and talents. . . . Furthermore, the principle of fair opportunity can be only imperfectly carried out, at least as long as the institution of the family exists. . . . So . . . we cannot be satisfied short of the democratic conception. . . . The democratic interpretation . . . is arrived at by combining the principle of fair equality of opportunity with the difference principle. This principle . . . single[s] out a particular position from which the social and economic inequalities of the basic structure are to be judged. . . . The higher expectations of those better situated are just if and only if they work as part of a scheme which improves the expectations of the least advantaged members of society.

To be sure, the actual logical implications of Mr. Rawls's view are equivocal. From one standpoint he seems to be expressing only what the economist, Kenneth Arrow, calls "asset egalitarianism." This is the presumption that, whatever talents and abilities each of us has, they are to be considered, from an economic point of view, as available to a common pool for whatever distribution justice dictates. As Arrow says, this presumption is the essential basis of all attempts to formalize welfare economics. From a moral point of view, it seems to me unexceptionable as well. I read nothing in the pulse-beat of the cosmos which gives anyone an *a priori* right to a free ride in the world. Nevertheless, this principle is compatible, in welfare economics, with quite substantial inequalities provided that they are socially efficient; and the same logic seems to apply to Mr. Rawls's general formula. Just as Locke's rationale for private property could be used by Proudhon and Marx to show that private property was a form of theft, so there is nothing in principle to prevent Mr. Rawls's argument from being used to justify great inequalities. All that would be needed is to show that, on some version of the trickle-down theory, the poor benefited from the advantages offered the rich.

It could be argued, for example, that sharply graduated rewards to Stakhanovites, entrepreneurs, or oil-well owners are the only way to increase productivity and make enough available for everyone. It could be argued, indeed, that social inequality is itself the principal incentive that makes people work in an affluent society. The individual's desire for mere material goods can be surfeited, but not his desire to move up in the world or to wear the stigmata of having arrived. Nor is the answer available, to one who takes a position such as that of Mr. Rawls, that the world's condition would be improved if people didn't work so hard. In Mr. Rawls's formula, the more fortunate owe something to the less fortunate (a point on which I agree), and as long as hundreds of millions of people have too little, the life styles of the comfortable should be so arranged that these people keep turning out more wealth than they themselves need. Thus, social inequality, it is at least possible, is society's chief instrument for making conditions at the bottom of the pile more decent. And "classlessness" is an ideal that may well rest on comfortable people's perception of the world—the rich man's poor man's paradise.

It could be argued, indeed, that in a benevolent aristocracy, with sharply marked class distinctions, the lowly gain more than in an equality-oriented society. They are given powerful protectors, models to admire, the sense of contributing to a meaningful social drama, and some knowledge of the difference between the noble and the ignoble. Self-respect, in Mr. Rawls's view, is one of the primary goods of life, as it is in mine. It is surprising that he doesn't give more attention to the possibility, which has, after all, been explored by philosophers, historians, sociologists, novelists, and playwrights, that an aristocracy, which assigns every man a place in the social procession, is better for self-respect than an egalitarian society that generates loneliness, anxiety, and identity crises. I would not myself wish to defend very hard any of the arguments for inequality I have given here, but Mr. Rawls's book seems to me notable for its abstemious disregard of all such arguments. It shuns specific analyses of actual cultures, eras, or types of social system, and it treats such possibilities as I have described with a

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remote eye, as though they were temptations which all decent men had long since learned to resist.

In the end, Mr. Rawls offers simply the assurance that, in societies in which people live up to the principles of justice as he defines them, income differences will just naturally tend to diminish. For such societies, as he says, have a quality of "close-knittedness," which serves the harmonizing function in Mr. Rawls's system that "the invisible hand" did in 18th-century economics. There is that, indeed, about Mr. Rawls's argument which marks it, like Herbert Marcuse's, as pre- or post-Malthusian. He seems to me not seriously to believe in the insatiability of human demands, or the unavoidability of competition for scarce resources, or the irreducibility of differences about what, in particular cases, really is just. He takes harmony to be a natural condition of life, at any rate if people do what's right. A more selfish or malicious man than Mr. Rawls, armed with such a philosophy, could use it with perfect logic to justify degrees of inequality that not merely Mr. Rawls would disapprove but most of the rest of us as well. He would need merely to say that all evil would be seen to be good in the larger knit of things.

Nevertheless, however open to different practical interpretations Mr. Rawls's abstract formulas may be, there is little room for doubt as to just where his own sentiments lie. Inequality as such is in the defendant's seat. Equality comes to the bar with every presumption of innocence on its side. So complete is Mr. Rawls's commitment to this position that nowhere in his book does he seriously consider what is surely a more widespread intuition as to the nature of justice than his own. This is the quite commonplace view that distinctions should be made among people, and rewards and burdens distributed, in proportion to individual efforts and achievements. I do not regard this principle as a basic axiom of morals, but in Mr. Rawls's book it is almost as though such a view didn't exist, and certainly as though no one felt strongly about the matter. He treats this position always as though it could make sense only as a pragmatic maxim, defensible simply insofar as incentives are needed to keep a society efficient—a kind of compromise with human nature, as it were, rather like a red-light district.

Now what is the logic of an approach to the question of social justice which takes it for granted that if income and wealth are equally distributed no questions need to be asked, but if there are inequalities the institutions of a society should be indicted and brought to trial? I find it puzzling. The first thing that is puzzling about it is that there is an inherent "antinomy" within the concept of equality itself, to which Mr. Rawls, for all the extraordinary scope and detail of his book, gives little direct attention.

Briefly, any statement that two or more persons are "equal" requires some standard—height, weight, IQ, constitutional rights, golf score—by which to compare them. And when we compare people by one standard the results are different from those we reach when we use other standards. The student who can get into Yale because he does well on College Boards takes the place of the student who rated high because his father was a rich alumnus. The victory of those who say that women cannot have equality so long as marriage, home, and family are perceived as their primary roles puts the young woman who wants just such roles at a psychological and educational disadvantage. Equalities make for inequalities. The question is not, Do you favor equality? It is, *Which* equality are you for, and what inequality are you willing to accept as its cost? This kind of issue has little place in Mr. Rawls's book. The presumption of a larger harmony in which such conflicts are transcended presides over the argument.

To be sure, Mr. Rawls does try to clear away the equivocations built into the notion of equality by introducing the basic concept of "primary goods." However much people's goals in life may differ, their life-prospects depend in common, he points out, on certain "primary goods." Some of these are "natural"—e.g., health, vigor, intelligence, and imagination. Others are "social" because they are "at the disposition of society." The chief primary social goods are rights and liberties, powers and opportunities, income and wealth, and self-respect. Yet this concept, I believe, only obscures, but does not avoid, the difficulties I have mentioned. Are the opportunities Jones the plumber seeks to be put on the same scale as those which Smith the mathematician needs? Can we even begin to discuss this question without having some sense of the two men's common environment, the needs of their society, the resources available, and the like? Or more generally still, if there are scarcities, and some primary good must be reduced, the operative question is to decide which good, and whose, and how much. General rules to the effect that all should have equal powers or equal opportunities are not much help in solving this problem. We need further guidance which allows us to say that some things are unequal to other things—e.g., opportunities to kill oneself with cigarettes are less important than opportunities to kill oneself with overwork.

These are concrete, not only abstract, philosophical points. The most difficult problems of social choice, and the elements of arbitrariness (I do *not* say, caprice) that appear to be uneliminable from them, are not given anything like the attention by Mr. Rawls that he gives to his general formula. To take a simple illustration, the "natural" goods of which he speaks are not entirely out of reach of social control. If a society is willing to spend

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enough—our own is an example—it can keep large numbers of people going with rebuilt hearts, kidney machines, artificial limbs, repeated surgery, and expensive drugs. To what extent should such practices be continued or augmented? The material resources poured into them, after all, could be used to house the poor more adequately. Notions about the equal distribution of personal income tell us little here, for we are talking about the allocation of public funds in the interests of one or another social category.

And that, of course, is one of the most difficult problems of all in Mr. Rawls's maxim that all social arrangements should be judged by their effect on the least fortunate members of society. It is not a quibble, and it is not insensitivity to human suffering but quite the reverse, to ask, Who *are* the least fortunate? The sick, or the healthy but unemployed poor? The old or the orphans? The criminals incarcerated in inhuman conditions or the mentally retarded? In dealing with such problems even in rich societies there are shortages—if not in money then in human resources of sympathy, patience, knowledge, and skill. Dividing these resources up equally may mean that no group receives the amounts needed to make a difference. It is such choices that any public authority must make; and I take it that it will have to make them even in a just society.

Indeed, public authority must sometimes ask as well, unless I am mistaken, whether the top priority should always be investment in the interests of the unfortunate. Should investment in the education of the gifted always be subordinated to investment in the education of the retarded? The response that to help the gifted is, in a just society, also to help the retarded is a dodge. It may be, but everyday experience doesn't suggest that it has to be. Is it to be maintained that society has no legitimate independent interest in encouraging musical genius or philosophical analysis? I cannot see why the consistent application of Mr. Rawls's "difference principle"—the principle of always favoring the unfavored—would not lead to the progressive pauperization of a society.

IN THE final analysis, I think, there is a fundamental premise on which his entire argument turns. It is also the premise on which the new "redemptive" egalitarianism essentially depends. Again and again, Mr. Rawls comes back to the same point: to distribute the burdens and benefits of social existence in accordance with people's abilities is "arbitrary from a moral point of view." I take one typical statement, but there are scores of others.

> Perhaps some will think that the person with greater natural endowments deserves those assets and the superior character that made their development possible. Because he is more worthy in this sense, he deserves the greater advantages that he could achieve with them. This view, however, is surely incorrect. It seems to be one of the fixed points of our considered judgments that no one deserves his place in the distribution of native endowments, any more than one deserves one's initial starting place in society. The assertion that a man deserves the superior character that enables him to cultivate his abilities is equally problematic; for his character depends in large part upon fortunate family and social circumstances for which he can claim no credit. The notion of desert seems not to apply to these cases.

From an Archimedean point of view, if I follow, from outside the world and not inside it, no one deserves to be treated better than anybody else. True. From such a point of view no one deserves anything. But the relevance of this proposition to problems of human justice I do not detect.

Yet it expresses the *Weltanschauung* of the new egalitarians. "Luck" is the principal actor in Christopher Jencks's account of the causes of inequality. "The natural lottery" is the phrase Mr. Rawls uses repeatedly as the label for the accidents that determine why Blanche is beautiful, Ursula ugly, Ruth loyal and persevering, Ramona flighty and deceitful. We are all creatures of "the arbitrariness found in nature," all victims, and it isn't fair that some of us should be victimized more than others. Thus, equality: it is needed to wipe the slate clean, to save us from nature's injustice, to restore the moral *status quo ante* just as though there were such a *status quo ante*.

But the argument, as an argument about human justice, falters. It may be that, from an "ultimate" point of view, no man "deserves the superior character that enables him to cultivate his abilities." After all, before he was born he could hardly have done anything to merit such a reward! (Or was his soul already in existence?) But if we look at matters from a less remote perspective, the man of twenty, in possession of a superior character that enables him to cultivate his abilities, can usually be shown to have done *something* to produce this character. Has there been no hard work, inner discipline, lacerating struggle with his soul? Is it all the throw of the dice? Nor does the recognition that the social circumstances into which we are born affect our chances to cultivate our abilities turn the thrust of this point aside. Obviously, it is harder to develop one's abilities in an inner-city slum, and obviously social justice calls for the remedying of such conditions of poverty. But quite large numbers of people with superior characters come out of inner-city slums, and Scarsdale has been known to produce its quota of feckless types.

"The social system," says Mr. Rawls, "is not an unchangeable order beyond human control, but a pattern of human action." He is right. Clearly, Nature hands out its favors capriciously, and a humane social order will not aggravate, but will seek to reduce the impact of natural mis-

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fortune. It will protect the weak, save the foolish from derision and humiliation, offer avenues out of hereditary poverty, and ascribe certain common rights to all, whatever their "just moral deserts." It will not invoke "the arbitrariness of nature" as an excuse for treating individuals cavalierly. But this is not at all the same thing as to say that it is morally wrong for a society to notice, approve, or reward outstanding gifts, particularly when the individuals who have these gifts have played some part in developing them. Organized society, by and large, can reach very few goals without engaging the voluntary cooperation of its members. And this involves its introducing moral and social rules under which, short of obvious excusing conditions like infancy or insanity, people are expected to take responsibility for what they do and for being the kind of people they are. Whether this also requires that large rewards be given to those of "superior character" is an empirical matter on which opinions may differ. But in drawing up a theory of justice for a society, rules for fixing responsibility pertinent not to souls facing their Maker in the final settlement of things, but to people making the actual choices of life, ought to be incorporated. At least to me it seems that a theory of justice which treats the individual as not an active participant in the determination of his fate, and which is guided by the model of life as a lottery, is unlikely to strengthen people's sense of personal responsibility. Is it not possible to feel compassion for those who, through no fault of their own, get the dirty end of things, without discarding the entire notion of "moral desert"?

We come, in the end, to that curious phrase of Mr. Rawls's—"morally arbitrary." The word "arbitrary" when used in contexts of this sort has two possible meanings. It can mean that something has been done in violation of a moral rule; for example, a public official who acts unconstitutionally is behaving "arbitrarily." Or it can mean that there is no relevant moral norm with respect to which the action is governed. In deciding whether to read a detective story or go out to the movies, I flip a coin: the result, in this sense, is "arbitrary." Which is it that Mr. Rawls means when he speaks of the distribution of personal talents and defects as "morally arbitrary"? That some pertinent moral norm has been broken? If so, he presupposes a moral design in the Creation. He has Job's problem before Job acquired wisdom. But if he means only that no moral norm is properly assignable to the process by which cardinals are red and pigeons gray, he is simply uttering the irrefutable proposition that contingency is in the universe.

This is why the label "redemptive" seems to me the right one for the kind of egalitarianism Mr. Rawls's book espouses. It judges our world from a position putatively outside it. The certainty of a moral geometry is sought, not the probabilities of men and women limited by place, time, and mortality. An ultimate harmony of things is presumed, not the irreducibility of at least some conflicts or the idiosyncrasy of some tastes. And the issues are formulated, ultimately, in the classic redemptive style: we are for Equality or against it, for God's Justice or against it. The struggle is between the Children of Light and the Children of Darkness.

Most pertinent of all, the notion of moral responsibility on which this form of egalitarianism rests is one appropriate to an omnipotent God, wondering what went wrong with His creation, and not mortal beings whose perspectives have to be more limited. When God deals the cards, one man turns out to be Richard Nixon, another Jean-Paul Sartre, another Charles Manson. Facing this situation, God has only one of two options: He can take full responsibility for what He has done, and say that in His eyes none of us can claim any credit or take any blame, or He can leak some free will into the premises, and say that the defects in His creation are not His but His creatures'. In brief, He can hold us either entirely responsible for what we are or not responsible at all. But short of these heavenly horizons, surely there are reasonable distinctions to be made. The problem which the redemptive theory of equality is trying to solve, in the final analysis, is a version of the theological problem of evil: How could God, who loves all His children equally, have assigned so many of His children to hell? Redemptive egalitarianism is only indirectly concerned with removing specific inequities. Its deeper concern is to restore things to their original Design, to remove the blight of Accident from the world, and make obtuse Matter lie down and be obedient to God's plan.

III

Yet I would refuse to stop calling myself an egalitarian. So much in the foreground is this new egalitarianism that it is easy to forget that there is another form of egalitarianism with quite substantial credentials. It would be a tragedy if redemptive egalitarianism drove it from the field, for it incorporates, I think, most of our best values, politically and morally. It is a product not so much of religious and philosophical preoccupations as of the secular life of social democracies and the actual experience of democratic politics. It is represented in the tradition of liberal reformers like Brandeis and that of democratic socialists like Léon Blum or Willy Brandt. This "corrective egalitarianism" is composed of one part self-interested prudence, one part a special brand of courtesy, and one part ethical belief.

Reflecting, some years ago, on the condition of public hospitals in the United States, A. J. Liebling wrote:

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If the wife of a wealthy Rhode Islander fell ill he would send her to a place like Butler or the Hartford Retreat or Chestnut Lodge. This is cheaper, for a large taxpayer, than paying a proportionate share of the upkeep of an adequate hospital system. . . .

I often wonder what would have happened if all men of military age hadn't been compelled to go into the same public armed forces during the most recent war, and if there had been a nice private auxiliary army available for the sons of large taxpayers. I believe that rations, clothing, medical attention, and pay would have been lousy in the ranks of the public army. To compensate for these drawbacks, discipline would have been much more severe, and the newspapers would have been full of editorials against coddling public soldiers.

There was no attempt to run war on that system, and I sometimes doubt that we should run peace that way.

This perfectly expresses the prudential element in corrective egalitarianism. It is the less powerful man's insurance policy. If severe burdens are going to be imposed—conscription, food shortages—let them be equally distributed or, if that is impossible, let them fall by lot on the great and the lowly alike. "Equality," so conceived, is a principle for the distribution of hardships. Thus, traditional egalitarians did not oppose the situation in which the rich could go to their own universities, provided that they paid enough in taxes to support adequate universities for others, and didn't steal all the best people away. This toleration reflected the judgment that not being able to go to Harvard, though undoubtedly a misfortune in the eyes of the Lord, is still not an acute hardship. The same principle is at the base of the constitutional political tradition, Greek and modern. The political equalities affirmed by conservatives like Madison—e.g., the basic individual rights, the applicability of the laws to governors and governed alike—express the elementary wariness that lies at the source of more general forms of egalitarianism.

Rousseau went only one step farther when, in *The Social Contract*, he defined "equality" in economic and social terms: "By equality, we should understand not that the degree of power and riches be absolutely identical for everybody, but that . . . no citizen be wealthy enough to buy another, and none poor enough to sell himself." Rousseau was also the progenitor of more "redemptive" forms of egalitarianism, but here he perfectly expresses the "corrective" notion of equality. Spinoza's words catch the same idea: "It is certain that if equality of conditions be once laid aside, liberty perishes." In this tradition, equality is to be understood, in other words, in relative terms. It is defined in relation always to a specific imbalance, perceived to be dangerous to important values, and therefore to be prevented, reduced, or removed. So approached, there are no answers to the general questions, What is equality?, or, Why equality? There are only answers specific to definite problems.

But this older egalitarianism is, of course, more than only a concern for self-protection. It is a manner, a cultural style. In an egalitarian climate a man's background, education, or social position don't appear to be the main things on other people's minds when they meet and treat with him. Cultures differ strongly in this regard. The Greek Odysseus, returning to Ithaca after twenty years, climbs happily into a peasant's cart to ride the last mile to his palace. The English King Arthur, riding with a peasant, throbs with anxiety that he may not be acting like a man of royal breed. To be an egalitarian is to prefer the former ambience to the latter.

It is, of course, a difference in degree, not in kind. There are no cultures that are perfectly egalitarian, and few which make rank and hierarchy dominant considerations under every condition. And insofar as egalitarianism is a style or a code of courtesy, it is the seeming that counts. It can in fact make a great difference. French courtesy, nondeferential, egalitarian, contributes to an image of fact which clashes with the divisive inequalities in French life, and almost certainly has something to do with French political tensions. The difference between an egalitarian and inegalitarian climate may be "merely" a matter of surface, but it is an objective and palpable difference, as anyone who has lived in France and in Sweden can testify. And this is so even though the economic inequalities in the egalitarian country may be sharper than in the inegalitarian one.

However, since manners don't usually exist in the void, egalitarianism, it need hardly be said, has also been an ethical outlook. We misstate it when we formulate it in terms of the great swinging abstractions, much loved by philosophers, clergymen, and politicians on the stump, such as that each person, having the capacity to be moral, shall be treated as the moral equal of every other. These make it sound either thin or impenetrable. But we know what egalitarianism has been: we need look no farther than representative figures of the "common man" or the "little man" like Lincoln, Huck Finn, and Charlie Chaplin.

What is the ethical outlook of egalitarianism as most of us grew up recognizing it? It was a conviction that there are people of power and feeling hidden away in all sectors of society, and that life would be richer if they were found. It was the suspicion that there is nothing like being on top to make a man a windbag, and that it does everybody a world of good to see him slip on a banana peel. It was the knowledge that the rich and powerful, not necessarily through malice but simply as a reflex of who they were and what they had, would have a natural tendency to try to form a

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closed club and keep others out. A balanced distribution of power and resources was desirable, therefore, if the individual was to count for more than social class.

But what is most striking is the moral framework within which these judgments were made. The ideal of equality, historically speaking, took its meaning, and its limits, from a larger scheme of values in which it was only one element. What is it that Lincoln, Huck, and Charlie represent? They represent virtues that democratic egalitarianism has traditionally thought ultimately important in a person: chivalry, loyalty, generosity, at least a rough courtesy, self-reliance and self-discipline, an eagerness to improve oneself but also a sense of amusement at oneself, respect for an honest day's work and getting one's hands dirty, a capacity to tell the genuine article from the fake, and a certain earthiness and imperviousness to gentility. It was because Nigger Jim had these qualities that Huck refused to do what his conscience told him and turn Jim in.

EGALITARIANISM, in the past, represented the moral hope that such qualities would triumph in the world. It was not "nonjudgmental," and neither was it "meritocratic." Behind the roles that men performed and the positions they occupied, it saw them in terms of their general traits of character. It was not primitivist either, not part of the cult of the honest peasant. ("Don't talk to me about peasant virtues," Chekhov once said. "I have peasant blood in my veins.") And it is a caricature to think of it as "middle class." The virtues it admired were drawn from the traditions and experiences of all classes. And while it espoused equality, it did so in recognition of the value of other things which create differences, partisan feelings, and stratification in society—parental and personal affections, voluntary association and friendship, the desire of people to join with others with common experiences and tastes, and, not least, the need in every society to give public recognition to things noble and excellent lest everything in the society's culture be regarded as disposable. These are all considerations that set some limits upon the proper range of the principle of equality. They do not subvert it; they merely keep it sane.

When philosophers treat moral systems as though they were geometrical deductions from basic premises, they mislead us as to both the actualities and the possibilities of moral reasoning. We don't start from scratch in developing our moral attitudes, we begin *in medias res*, with the attitudes, memories, affections, aversions that we happen to have in all their disorder. And when one or another value, or group of values, becomes dominant in our minds—for example, equality—when, in order to clarify choices or stabilize social policy, we formulate this value as a basic regulative principle, it remains a principle in a setting, an ideal with a home. It takes its meaning, and has its limits defined, by the larger system of values to which it belongs. The fallacies of the new egalitarianism come largely from having ripped the notion of equality loose from its context. The result is to turn it into a principle vagrant and homeless, and identifiable in fact only if a quasi-theological context is unconsciously imported.

I think it unlikely that there will ever be a day when men will be satisfied with the inequalities they experience, or with the equalities. Equality and inequality are surely one of the perennial themes of politics. My own strong, and I should like to think reasoned, sympathies are with the egalitarians. But it is with the egalitarians who see equality not as a first principle but as a member of a family of principles, and not as a truth brought down from on high but as a complaint expressed from below. I should be surprised if I could demonstrate the rightness of my view by deducing it from transcendent principles. I comfort myself with the thought, however, that justice is not found by geometric formula, but by a humbler process in which we correct our prejudice by seriously considering other people's. And when we reflect on the antinomies inherent in the idea of equality, we know that, even when we think that we have found justice, we can be fairly sure that what we have found will have only a temporary validity.

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Moral Education and the Schools

Diane Ravitch

The influence of the conduct and example of adults on the infant mind has been much too slightly regarded, though it would seem sufficiently obvious that the habits and characters of children are formed upon the model of those to whom they look up for support and protection. If these *indulge in angry passions, show a disregard to truth and sincerity, and are otherwise immoral in their conduct, can it be a matter of surprise that the children should be depraved?*

—Manual of the Free School Society
New York City, 1820

THE trustees of the Free School Society, a philanthropic organization that established tuition-free schools in the early 19th century for poor children in New York, knew perfectly well what to expect of their teachers: only to have "the most unblemished characters with regard to moral conduct," to be truthful, sincere, frank, open, self-controlled, firm, reasonable, loving, and kind. They were responsible, after all, for nothing less than "the habits and characters of the men and women of the next generation." There was no doubt in the minds of the Society's leaders that the "evil example" of parents and the neglect of a proper education were what caused children to become the "pests of society."

In the 19th century, the belief that schooling had a beneficial impact on character and morals was far more widely held than was the notion that it led to a higher income. Elementary readers often contained a set piece, of the kind which children were supposed to memorize and recite, with titles like "Knowledge Is Better Than Wealth," a point presumably worth stressing because of the popularity of the contrary view. Moral education was homiletic, stressing rote memorization of simplistic slogans, but there did seem to be broad agreement throughout American society on the importance of inculcating a moral code that stressed industry, honesty, bravery, piety, diligence, orderliness, punctuality, and frugality.

The relative simplicity of 19th-century moral strictures is interesting today for the contrast that it offers to our own muddled state. "Moral education" is hardly discussed any longer among American educators; if anything, the phrase itself has become discredited, conjuring up as it does insincere posturing, empty and hypocritical lecturing. The issue is further complicated by disagreement over such traditionally moral questions as pornography, infidelity, abortion, drugs, euthanasia. Besides, certain behavior once generally considered anti-social now finds apologists; the defacing of public property, for example, now a common phenomenon, has been lauded in both the academic and the popular press as an ingenious expression of folk art. In fact, there is scarcely any form of individual behavior, regardless of its personal or social consequences, without its defenders, whether it is Eldridge Cleaver justifying rape, Yippies justifying "trashing," Watergaters justifying eavesdropping and burglary. A great many people, on both the Left and Right ends of the political spectrum, seem to have concluded that one can choose which laws to obey and which to ignore. Personal morality has become a matter of each doing his own "thing" and negotiating afterward for amnesty or immunity, as circumstances warrant.

Let us for the purposes of this essay consider moral education, as the Free School Society did in 1820, to mean that which influences the "habits and characters" of the rising generation, or, in John Dewey's phrase, "ideas of any sort whatsoever which take effect in conduct and improve it, make it better than it otherwise would be." In this sense, we are surrounded throughout our lives by moral educators, whose influence on our behavior, values, and attitudes may be good or bad. The family is the primary moral educator, offering daily lessons on how to act toward others; the law educates; the government educates; the media educate. The number of sources attempting to influence habits and character is large; obviously not all of them accomplish their ends, nor are all their ends salutary. In many instances, indeed, the educators follow curricula of which they themselves are not aware.

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Moral education *in school* has a special importance because the school represents a planned and presumably controllable environment; the public school, moreover, as opposed to the private school, is a place to which presumably everyone in the community has access through a variety of representatives and on a variety of levels. Adults who are responsible for school policy can deliberate and choose among ways of creating a "proper" school environment. Yet today, people who think and write about education are divided, not only on how to go about creating a "proper" environment, but on the question of whether it is possible to do so, and even whether schools have the right to do so. There are basically three approaches to the question of moral education. First, there are those who believe that the school should not try to influence the development and attitudes of students at all. Second, there are those who believe that the school should implant specific attitudes in students. Last, there are those who believe that it is possible to educate within a framework of moral values without resorting to indoctrination.

The notion that schools should teach no values at all commands a diverse following. It is the view of "romantics" like A. S. Neill of Summerhill and of a portion of the contemporary "free school" movement; both groups are opposed to the imposition of adult authority and discipline, which they see as an attempt to squelch the freedom and individuality of the child. The teaching of values in public schools is also opposed by those groups whose values are threatened or offended by the majoritarian position. Thus, Catholics reject public-school nonsectarianism, militant blacks reject "pasteurized" approaches to black history, political radicals reject patriotic interpretations of American history; the list could be extended to include others who perceive that their rights and values are compromised in a public-school setting. Many such groups form their own schools, expressly to preserve and inculcate their own values.

Yet another version of the anti-value approach was stated last year in an article in the *Harvard Educational Review* by Carl Bereiter,* a professor at the University of Toronto who achieved some fame for his part in creating a highly structured reading program known as the Bereiter-Engelmann method. Bereiter argues that schools are not successful in influencing the way children turn out in later life and hence should not even try to do so. He maintains that only parents have a "clear-cut right" to educate their children and that schools should stick to providing child-care and skill-training.

At the opposite pole from the anti-value adherents are those who believe that the school must purposefully instill values and that indoctrination is a legitimate function of the school. This camp, too, includes a curious collection of bedfellows, among them the ideological extremes of American politics, religious groups, and old-fashioned moralists who would like to see the schools drill "proper" attitudes into the heads of their charges. (Of course, those deeply committed to a particular ideology never see its transmission as "indoctrination," but only as education in the true faith.)

Educational radicals are divided on the question of indoctrination. Some romantics, as I previously noted, oppose any attempt to press authority on children. But others on the Left believe that the school should transmit a radical perspective of American society, one which will expose its sickness and rapacity. The political Right, too, believes in indoctrination. Conservatives feel that the schools should insure conformity and obedience, as well as unquestioning acceptance of American institutions; in support of their views they undertake campaigns to remove controversial books from public-school lists or to fire nonconforming teachers.

The third path to moral education is the direction in which I would argue schools and teachers should aim. The reasons emerge from a consideration of the problems that arise when one decides either to teach no values at all or to indoctrinate.

All education implies the transmission of values. How a teacher acts toward children; how he resolves disputes among them; whether or not he requires children to be responsible for themselves and to act responsibly toward others—in short, every lesson he teaches, every decision he makes, every expectation he holds, has the potential of influencing his students' ideas about the world. In not giving children responsibility, in not expecting them to clean up after themselves, in not demanding that they cooperate with their fellows or requiring them to respect the rights of others, a teacher does not suspend the teaching of values but simply substitutes one set of values—a supremely selfish one—for another. Similarly, a teacher who will not teach a subject until his students ask to be taught, proceeding on the assumption that what children want is what is best for them and that he must not manipulate their growth, is in reality indulging in an elitist manipulation of another kind; by refusing to guide, inspire, prod, or challenge his students, by withholding choices and declining to impart skills and attitudes, he may be actively blocking the child's freedom and growth.

But suppose a teacher exposes his students to history and literature and the various academic disciplines while withholding judgment about good and evil, desirable and undesirable? This is what Professor Bereiter proposes in his article, "Schools without Education." Here too the teacher would merely be substituting one set of values, the values

* "Schools without Education," August 1972.

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of moral relativism, for another. Perhaps, more to the point, it is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine what a school without education would look like. In such a school, dedicated solely to skills and custodial care, teachers would energetically refrain from any effort to influence the behavior, values, and convictions of their students. This may do for a good vocational training program, but how can one teach literature or history without a sense of the good? Can either physical or social sciences be taught without regard to their human and social consequences? Dewey wrote that the teaching of geography, for example, was pointless unless connected with social life, with questions of how and why people's lives were influenced by geographical facts. To learn facts without understanding their implications is nonsensical; yet implications, interpretations, and judgments mean values.

The teachers in a school without education would have to work very hard to avoid exposing their students to the great works of art, like Picasso's *Guernica* or Shakespeare's tragedies, which make moral judgments on history and comment on how a man should live and die. The works that would have to be excluded from the curriculum of the Bereiter school would fill an entire library. In addition, since children from such a school would have no guidelines by which to assess their own behavior or anyone else's, literature and history, stripped of judgments, could be taught only as an accumulation of sterile facts and dates.

The school environment is itself a prime focus for the continual exercise of moral choice. The everyday occurrences of a school life, as of life in general, require evaluation and decision. A teacher is often faced with the dilemma of choosing among the conflicting rights of individuals or between the rights of an individual and those of the community. How is a teacher to deal with cheating? What is he to say to the student who asks for advice about a moral problem not connected with school—for example, the knowledge that a classmate has committed a crime: should he report him or help to conceal the facts? Most children are taught informally to be good team players, and not to be squealers; does Watergate cast this in a different light? Is it wrong for such questions to be discussed in a classroom?

WHAT children need to learn is not the right answer, but how to think about a problem; banishing the subject is too easy a solution. This is not to say, however, that the school must lend itself to indoctrination. A teacher indoctrinates if he teaches without giving evidence for his conclusions and evidence (or tools) for criticizing them; if he purveys his own point of view, or a particular ideology, as though it were established fact, intentionally disregarding differing views, or ideologies; if he presents only one side of a controversial issue; if he teaches what he knows to be false. The indoctrinated person tends to have pat answers for difficult questions; though he may defend his views with logic and proofs, he is likely to treat evidence in a slipshod fashion, reinterpreting facts to fit his ingrained faith.

If a teacher sets out to instill the belief that whites are evil, that whites are good, that blacks are inferior, that blacks are superior, that America is a sick society, that capitalism is the best economic system, then he is indoctrinating. Where the educator concentrates on teaching methods of inquiry, ways of assessing evidence and arriving at reasonable conclusions, the indoctrinator concentrates on implanting convictions. The educator succeeds when his students have learned enough to choose their own point of view, even if it challenges the teacher's; the indoctrinator succeeds when his students have absorbed his ideology.

In a new book, *Free the Children*,* Allen Graubard chides those "free" schools that shy away from politicizing their students. He feels that many of these schools, though obviously part of the counter-culture, are unnecessarily fearful of the charge of indoctrination, and that they should forthrightly immerse their students in a radical perspective of politics and culture. Graubard advocates indoctrination because he believes that the radical analysis of American society is correct, just as others believe that their ideology, and only theirs, is correct. In this Graubard resembles indoctrinators of the opposite political persuasion. When I was going to high school in Houston, Texas in the 1950's, for example, we were taught that Senator Joseph McCarthy was the greatest living American and that those trying to do him in were Communists. Our class was compelled to sit through anti-Communist and anti-Socialist lectures and movies; books about Russia, its geography, its history, and its infamous economic system were carefully removed from the shelves of our high-school library. Teachers who did not agree with the orthodoxy of the times were watched closely by parents and "members of the community," who occasionally sat in on classes to check out suspected subversives.

The indoctrination program of the Houston public schools was not especially effective; in fact it was probably counter-productive, it being the general tendency of my silent generation to discount whatever we were told by our teachers. Perhaps it is the inevitable reaction of adolescents against their environment that explains why many students of the 60's who were schooled in a libertarian atmosphere subsequently chose highly authoritarian figures for their heroes. In any event, the mark of dogmatism is as clearly identifiable on the Left as on the Right. Writing in the *Harvard Educational Review*, Graubard quotes a statement

* Pantheon, 306 pp. $7.95.

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by "the students" of a West Coast free school, giving their view of the public schools: "... after graduation from school the students go out into the world trained to fit into society. Our economic system must create men and women to fit its capitalistic needs. The system has to have men and women who have the same values, who feel free and independent but who will nevertheless do what is expected of them, people who can easily be controlled." This may have been easier to understand as the statement of an individual, rather than the collective voice of "the students." As it is, one wonders if there are divergent views at that school, whether the students have learned to criticize their own thinking and that of their teachers or are simply feeding back the ideology they are taught with no more independence of mind than those who learned morality by rote in the 19th century.

Where will these students go in order to avoid fitting the needs of a society they deplore? If they become reformers, they will help to ameliorate the ills of society and thus end up strengthening the system; if they engage in useful work, they will be perpetuating the status quo. Graubard is himself stumped on the question of how one lives in a society as "sick" as ours without contributing to the sickness; he proposes nothing more dramatic than that free-school people try to get elected to local school boards and press for government funds for their non-public schools in the form of a voucher plan.

INDOCTRINATION, whether it takes place in an authoritarian or a libertarian context, is an inappropriate and coercive solution to the problem of moral education in a democratic society. But is there a middle ground between indoctrination and the abdication of all values? Lawrence Kohlberg of Harvard University has articulated a developmental approach to moral education which blends together Dewey and Jean Piaget and attempts to establish a theoretical rationalization of just such a middle ground. On the evidence of crosscultural studies, Kohlberg believes that there are unmistakable stages of moral development which are common to all societies and all cultures. Morality does not consist of a predetermined list of values, force-fed into young children, nor is it the spontaneous unfolding of the individual's impulses and emotions. Morality, Kohlberg has written, is justice, "the reciprocity between the individual and others in his social environment." A commitment to justice implies a commitment to individual rights, to freedom, and to a society which embodies these principles. The language of justice is comprehensible across time and across national and cultural boundaries, whether it is spoken by a Socrates, a Gandhi, a Thoreau, a Solzhenitsyn, or a Martin Luther King.

Kohlberg's views echo those of John Dewey, who wrote that "apart from participating in social life, the school has no moral end nor aim." Those who would teach schoolchildren without exposing them to the principles of justice, without making them aware of their social responsibilities and without awakening them to genuine moral dilemmas, cannot be called educators. In contrast to the romantic (or value-free) educator, whose concern for the child's freedom makes him reluctant to direct the learning process, and the cultural transmitter (or indoctrinator), who sees education as an input-output process, Kohlberg's educator wants his students to think rationally and critically. Thus, he exposes his students to problematic situations, examples of social conflict among groups and individuals, which they must think about and participate in resolving. The goal of the teacher is not to find the "right" answer, but to encourage students to progress in their capacity to make moral judgments and to assess the consequences of their actions.

In order to teach justice, a school must itself be just; it must be committed to equality of educational opportunity, to respect for rationality, and to freedom of belief. These values necessarily preclude the use of indoctrination. Writes Kohlberg: "Not only are the rights of the child to be respected by the teacher, but the child's development is to be stimulated so that he may come to respect and defend his own rights and the rights of others." If indoctrination has no place in Kohlberg's scheme, it is likewise clear that the school's responsibility to its students does not begin and end with skill-training, by standing back and seeing whether children develop their own sense of values. The school's responsibility is to enable the student to grow by training him both to follow and to lead; to impart his cultural heritage; to prepare him to be a full participant in the political process; and to cultivate the physical, intellectual, and emotional discipline which will enable him to do well in later life.

This, the classic liberal idea of moral education, may seem inappropriate, to say the least, at a time when almost all critics are agreed that we should lower, not raise, our expectations of what schools can do. These critics have a point, for many Americans have indeed come to believe that the schools and the schools alone will bring about a just and equal society, quite irrespective of the actions of other private and public agencies. Putting so much faith in the corrective power of schooling is a way of avoiding other kinds of social and economic reform.

Yet what is needed now is not lowered but changed expectations. True, schooling does not guarantee success, but lack of schooling does appear to guarantee lack of success. Undeniably there is much that is wrong with the schools, including their tendency to substitute indoctrination for

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moral education. But the schools are where the children are, and the importance of improving them cannot be slighted. To rescue the schools and the idea of education both from unreal expectations and from nihilistic assaults is an urgent task, for what we do or fail to do in this area will have a profound effect on the future of society as a whole.

WHATEVER we may think about the current state of moral education, moral education goes on. Whether it is to be planned around a core of values stressing what Kohlberg has called the universal ethical principles, or imposed by those with a single message to proclaim, or haphazardly conducted by whatever images and models may impinge on a child's consciousness, is a choice which we make, consciously or unconsciously. In this connection Dewey's reflections in his *Moral Principles in Education* (1909) remain appropriate today:

> We need to see that moral principles are not arbitrary, that they are not "transcendental"; that the term "moral" does not designate a special region or portion of life. We need to translate the moral into the conditions and forces of our community life, and into the impulses and habits of the individual.

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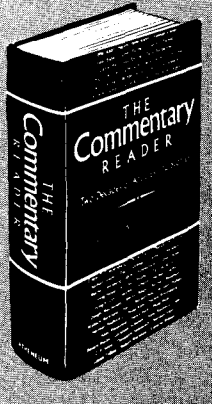

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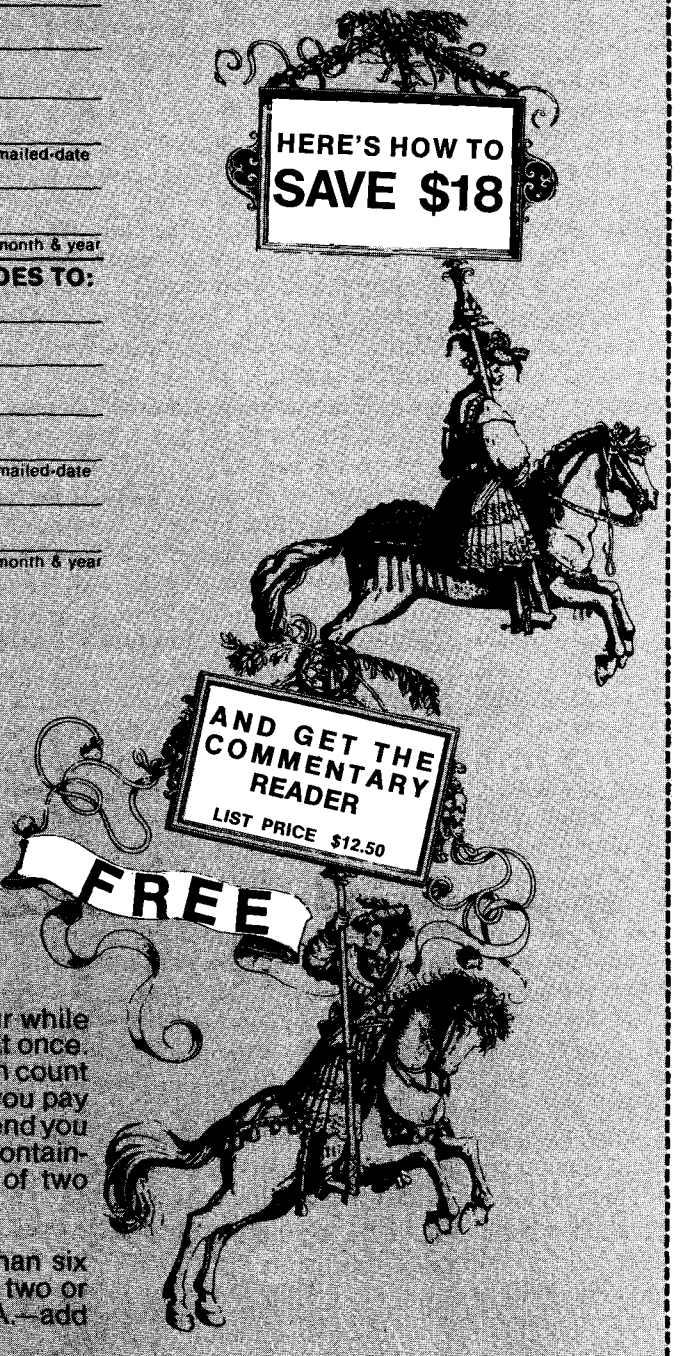

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A Dissent on Pynchon

David Thorburn

THE acclaim conferred upon Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow** probably reveals more about the uncertain state of our literary culture than about Pynchon's novel itself, which is brilliant in parts but confused and exceedingly tedious as a whole. There is, to be sure, a compelling seriousness in this immensely long book, and its author's remarkable verbal gifts are matched, even surpassed, by an extraordinary knowingness concerning modern literature, history, popular culture, statistical method, rocketry, the occult, Puritanism, the history of chemistry, and much, much more. But the claims made upon us by good novels, not to say great ones, surely differ from the claims put to us by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* and we do well to be suspicious of reviewers who think to win our regard for Pynchon's book by offering us elaborate inventories of its literary allusions or by expressing wonderment over its compulsive inclusiveness concerning historical and scientific lore.

It is scarcely puzzling that *Gravity's Rainbow* would be read uncautiously by reviewers already committed to the Pynchon cult—one of whom described *V* (1963) as "the most masterful first novel in the history of literature"—or by reviewers sympathetic to that fashionable radicalism whose chief features are a contempt for "established" culture and a blind devotion to apocalyptic styles and gestures. But it is surprising, or at least significant, that the consensus on *Gravity's Rainbow* should have turned out to be so encompassing, the *Yale Review,* no less, overgoing the *Village Voice* in its unqualified enthusiasm for what it described as "certainly the most important novel to be published in English in the past thirty years."

SET in England and occupied Europe near the end of World War II, but ranging in flashbacks and extended allusions across much of Western history, Pynchon's novel is governed by a desperate intuition of annihilation. In the opening chapter an English intelligence officer wakes from a dream of death into the real daylight of London during the Blitz, sees the vapor trail of a rocket in the sky and waits helplessly for its impact. "What if it should hit *exactly*," he thinks, "for a split second you'd have to feel the very point . . . strike the top of the skull." In the last chapter—some 750 densely obscure pages later—another rocket descends. But this time its "pointed tip . . ., falling nearly a mile per second, absolutely and forever without sound," is said to promise a full apocalypse; its target now is "everybody"—Pynchon's characters, the author himself, even his readers, all are caught in a literally final moment of prayer and terror prior to the death of the world.

This framing vision of death from the sky encloses a narrative—more accurately three or perhaps four main narratives and countless subsidiary stories—whose intricacy and enormous cast of characters would test the ingenuity of even the most dedicated puzzle-solver. One reviewer, whose respect for mere arithmetic far exceeds my own, reported counting at least three hundred characters and solemnly advised readers to keep an index of their first appearances.

The book's principal figure is an American officer named Tyrone Slothrop—much is made of his Puritan ancestry—who is serving in London as the novel begins. Ostensibly part of a vast intelligence operation whose task is to defend against the new V-2 rocket, Slothrop is himself spied upon, then victimized, by his own superiors, chief among whom is the English behaviorist Edward Pointsman whose brutal manipulation of the inner lives of his victims parallels the sexual violations committed by his Nazi counterpart, a rocket-commander named Blicero. Slothrop is important to Pointsman because a chart of his sexual conquests is discovered to correspond exactly to a map of V-2 strike-points, a correspondence whose military significance interests Pointsman much less than its apparent denial of known laws of cause and effect. Escaping from Pointsman fairly early in the book, Slothrop works his way through a ravaged, surrealistically transfigured European landscape, assuming bizarre disguises and encountering a large population of fellow victims, spies, counterspies, and grotesques—all of whom are ultimately (if often unknowingly) connected to one another, creatures in a world whose hidden linkages exhibit the terrible perfect coherence of paranoia. Slothrop's mysterious foreknowledge of the V-2 impact-sites, for example, turns out to be a consequence of his childhood conditioning by the Pavlovian experimenter, Laszlo Jamf, who subsequently engaged in rocket research in Germany and whose discovery of a special substance called Imipolex G is incorporated in the super-rocket that is launched in the final pages of the novel.

There is special irony in the fact

DAVID THORBURN's *study of Conrad is to be published early next year by Yale University Press.*

* Viking, 760 pp., $15.00

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that so many reviewers found Pynchon's undeniable intricacy and the prodigious scale of his book to be the ground of their excessive respect. For *Gravity's Rainbow*, far more effectively than Pynchon's two earlier novels, cultivates a tone of obsessive insouciance, and its comic (if finally wearying) irreverence is directed in part against the very pieties that have moved the reviewers to such extravagant praise. The peculiarly American and Puritan respect for laborious steadfastness, our culture's largely unexamined reverence for achievements of labyrinthine size, for *all* massive, intricate structures and enterprises—this reverence is at once absurd and contemptible to Pynchon, whose "heroes" are aimless victims, their lives damaged if not entirely absorbed by obscurely powerful systems—cartels, governments, espionage agencies—whose massive scale and complexity defy merely individual attempts to escape or simply to explain them. What is large and complicated, Pynchon tells us in his best (and self-judging) moments, what has taken years to build, is not therefore lovely or valuable, and may indeed be aberrant, grotesque, even murderous. The V-2 rocket—whose trajectory is described in Pynchon's title—is the novel's master emblem for this perverse misdirecting and abuse of living human energies, and one imagines that the reviewers' awed praise for the jigsaw-puzzle elaborateness of the book, for its sheer monumentalness, is less a source of pleasure than of discomfort for its author.

There are powerful and moving signs within the novel itself of precisely such discomfort, an unresolved, recurring suggestion that the haunted sensibility behind the book is more victim than master of the paranoia, solitariness, and necrophobia that are its principal themes. A balanced assessment of *Gravity's Rainbow*, it seems to me, would concede the genuine seriousness, the honesty, of Pynchon's efforts to confront and to dramatize his deepest fears and obsessions, and would concede as well that there are many dazzling passages in which these efforts succeed. But such an estimate would also involve the recognition that Pynchon's control of his materials is partial, radically imperfect. Put bluntly, by page 400 even the committed reader must begin to feel that he has had enough; by page 600 one begins to understand that Pynchon cannot stop himself, that he is in the grip of a compulsion to elaborate his design for its own sake and to repeat variations on themes long since extended and clarified. The fantastic doublings and triplings and quadruplings of plot and subplot, the wildly unchecked impulse to surreal enlargement and exaggeration, the desperate, bizarre puns and jokes, the comic-strip fragmentation of scene and narrative line, the apparently uncontrollable need for variations and reenactments that do not advance or deepen or qualify but merely repeat again, and yet again, what has come before—all this creates an inescapable impression not of imaginative vigor and fullness but of simple frenzy: a frenzy that muddles the distinction between literature and pathology and that leads ultimately to self-defeating confusion.

THE essence of Pynchon's argument, his root subject, is human freedom, or perhaps more accurately, the absence of freedom. In *V* and more compellingly in *Gravity's Rainbow*, Pynchon seeks to expose the men and especially the institutional and theoretical systems that stand in totalitarian opposition to individual fulfillment. His programmatic flouting of the conventions of realism is a direct and necessary consequence of this enterprise because he is concerned to represent the enemies of freedom not exactly as they exist outwardly in the "real" world, but rather as they are perceived in grotesquely distorted enlargement by the world's imprisoned or manipulated victims—the Preterite of the earth as they are called in the latest book, the great mass of ordinary individuals who are without privilege or station and who are not infected with Faustian ambitions. From this perspective, although their manic proliferation in *Gravity's Rainbow* is open to challenge, even Pynchon's extended, vividly concrete scenes of surreal degradation, masochism, and aggression must be regarded as a crucial, wholly legitimate aspect of his work. For these externalized enactments of his characters' fantasies—and the extraordinary tenderness with which Pynchon renders them—are intended to ratify a vision of the world in which our outer lives are so controlled and manipulated and *unfree* that only the inner life, in all its shocking elemental idiosyncrasy, remains as a precious sanctuary of individuality and freedom. Indeed, the tone of mordant comic desperation in *Gravity's Rainbow*, and the book's main plot as well, originate in part in Pynchon's fear that even this last line of defense, the vital inward life of our fantasies and repressions, is being menaced by a monstrous alliance of technology, political power, and behaviorist psychology.

To see Pynchon's intentions in this light is to understand the quality of his seriousness, if not finally to applaud his actual achievement. One need not accept his vision of things in order to acknowledge its integrity, and it is essential to recognize that Pynchon's work is far superior to that of a writer like William Burroughs, whose scenes of degradation and apocalypse have no authentic source beyond a desire for shock and self-gratification. Despite its extravagance, the critical enthusiasm for *Gravity's Rainbow* will have been valuable if it encourages a recognition of Pynchon's lonely integrity in a fictional mode currently infested with a whole swarm of trivial counterfeit Kafkas.

BUT intentions are not achievements, and *Gravity's Rainbow* remains, I think, a deeply confused and finally unpersuasive work. The heart of the confusion is the book's failure, or its inability, to convince us of the individuality of its characters, even those who play major parts in its tangled, extended drama. To complain that Pynchon's people are not credible is not to object to the surrealistic mode of *Gravity's Rainbow*. It is not, that is, to withhold belief in his characters because what happens to them could not happen in

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the ordinary world we inhabit. Pynchon, as I have tried to suggest, is fully entitled to his imaginative distortions of reality. But there are some liberties denied to him in consequence of his underlying theme and in consequence of his very ambitiousness.

The epic proportions and strategies of *Gravity's Rainbow*, its historical range, its immense cast of characters, all these continually insist on the book's universality: they make an unmistakable claim to represent not the agonies and obsessions of a single sensibility but the true nature of the modern world and, beyond this, of Western culture as a whole. To authenticate such a claim Pynchon must populate his book with people who are distinguishable from one another and from himself; he must imagine a world whose amplitude can be perceived not simply in its temporal or spacial extensiveness but also in its human variousness; he must not imprison his characters so narrowly as to force their every thought and act to betray their origins in his own imperial intentions for the structure or meaning of his novel. That he fails here, and decisively, becomes increasingly clear as the book continues, as plot and subplot wind back upon themselves, as the fantasies as well as the outer adventures of the characters, despite superficial differences in detail, begin to seem interchangeably obedient to a single paranoid drama whose recurring categories include excrement, sexual violation, enclosure, and imprisonment.

Moreover, Pynchon's reductive characterization is a source of further confusion exactly because his seminal theme is our menaced personal freedom. If his characters have no autonomy to lose, if they appear mainly as virtual puppets—creatures of his abstract design or his inner needs—then Pynchon's argument is enfeebled beyond cure; and what is intended to be a rich paradigm for the human circumstance becomes merely a self-validating if ingenious artifact whose coherence has been established only by ignoring precisely those qualities of personal idiosyncrasy and autonomy that the novel claims as its generative concern.

THERE is a sour paradox in the rigor with which *Gravity's Rainbow* confutes itself. For though Pynchon's sympathies—his clear humane intentions—are fully given over to the Slothrops of the world, his actual performance would seem to ally him with the characters he wishes to condemn and expose. As Pointsman or Blicero manipulate and encage their victims, so Pynchon the novelist rules his characters, denying or reducing their potential for individuation out of an unyielding and systematic need to fit them to general meanings that collide with or, at best, simply ignore their allegedly individual natures.

Early in the story, for example—in a passage widely praised by the reviewers—Slothrop lapses into a drug-induced fantasy in which he descends through a toilet into the Boston sewers in order to escape from an assault-team of black-rapist-militants led by the young Malcolm X. The episode is full of vividly particularizing details; it is elaborately linked to many other episodes in the novel. But its largest effect is to reduce Slothrop to a mere name, his personal attributes absorbed or simply forgotten by Pynchon's rage for order. That this fantasy of racial uprising and homosexual rape belongs not to Slothrop but to his tendentious creator becomes clear when we learn that the whole passage is an elaborately detailed appropriation of the third and fourth chapters of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, which recount Malcolm's experiences as an attendant and shoeshine boy in the men's room of the Roseland Ballroom in Boston. It is the facts of Malcolm's life, not Slothrop's, that explain the passage: that explain why he gets sick in *this* men's room in this thematically convenient historical moment.

The episode, like most in the novel, offers a brilliantly realized sense of locale, of the physical *space* in which the action occurs, but it is far less persuasive concerning the individual who allegedly inhabits that space. If we ask why Slothrop's fantasy life should express itself in this way, why *he* should be obsessed by toilets or blacks or homosexuality, our answers must look through or beyond him: the book is about paranoia; racial oppression is one of its themes; enclosure in small places and homosexual violation are necessary to the book's design. Or we might be told that all white Americans harbor such fears and that Slothrop is their emblem here. But this answer, too, though it extends Pynchon's conception in yet another (and, of course, questionable) way, defines Slothrop yet again not as an individual but as a member of a class, a mere carrier of meanings outside himself, a human cipher whose inner life is in essence almost indistinguishable from that of the other characters in this obsessively self-ratifying world.

In a writer of merely ordinary talent this constricting purposiveness would be far more obvious, but Pynchon is no ordinary writer. Relying on an apparently limitless fund of knowledge and commanding a prose style whose richness and suppleness justify comparison with Dickens and Joyce, Pynchon is capable of overwhelming scenic vividness. I think it possible, in fact, that Pynchon himself, along with most of his reviewers, was simply swept along by this extraordinary gift for dramatic immediacy and particularity. Admirable as this gift is, however, it cannot do everything, and in the end, I think, it becomes clear that no amount of historical knowingness, no inventory of brilliantly authentic external details, can answer for Pynchon's failure to allow his characters an imaginative space of their own.

That the author of *Gravity's Rainbow* is ambitious and talented is surely true. But I think he has not yet written a book in which his powerful intuition of crisis and his hunger for coherence have yielded fully to the claims of art.

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Mumford in Retrospect

Peter Shaw

LEWIS MUMFORD is probably best known as a critic of architecture and city planning, but he has regretted being identified with these subjects alone on the grounds that "if I have any field of specialization at all, it is the all-inclusive one of the social philosopher." Beginning with his first book, *The Story of Utopias,* in 1922, Mumford has written as one who takes it upon himself periodically to deliver an assessment—generally adverse—on the condition of the planet. A recently issued selection from his works, *Interpretations and Forecasts, 1922-1972,** affords an opportunity to survey his career and assess its strengths and weaknesses.

During the 1920's Mumford largely concerned himself with the subject of American culture. He moved from editing and writing for the *Dial* in 1919 to the magazines of the time most concerned with social and cultural issues: the *New Republic,* Mencken's *American Mercury, Harper's,* and the *Freeman,* which under Van Wyck Brooks's literary editorship set itself against the *Dial*'s international aestheticism.

In 1930, Mumford began work on a series of books which came to be known collectively as "The Renewal of Life." Loose surveys of the history of culture, they provided vehicles for his simultaneous denunciation and encouragement of Western civilization. His aim appears to have been to answer Oswald Spengler. Accepting Spengler's notion of decline, Mumford argued nonetheless, "matching metaphor for metaphor, . . . that in deepest winter, the buds of spring have already emerged and await only the first warm sun. Life must go on. . . ." There is some confusion about exactly which titles constitute "The Renewal of Life." Originally Mumford planned a single book, *Technics and Civilization* (1934). Then he conceived two more volumes, *The Culture of Cities* (1938) and *The Condition of Man* (1944), and finally a tetralogy which ended with *The Conduct of Life* (1951), a title borrowed from Emerson. But in 1970, without indicating which volume it was supposed to replace, he called his new *The Pentagon of Power* the last of the four.

The "Renewal of Life" series launched Mumford as a spokesman. He proceeded to comment on the rise of fascism, to urge America's entry into World War II, and then to warn of the moral dangers which accompanied this necessary decision. He did not abandon architecture, as his awards testify. Beginning in 1932, in his *New Yorker* magazine "Skyline" column, he discussed regional planning, preservation of the landscape, and the design of new buildings. After the war he participated in symposia on the dangers of the atom, the postwar consumer society, and other problems of the day. With these activities came honors and attacks. Mumford accepted numerous professorships and visiting professorships, served on the New York City Board of Education, and was president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Among other honors, he received the National Book Award in 1962 for *The City in History.* The notable attacks came from Meyer Schapiro in 1938 and James T. Farrell in 1940 and 1945. Both criticized Mumford's imprecise style and vague hopefulness.

Throughout his career, Mumford's expanding concern with world conditions has remained a product of the intellectual climate which emerged in the United States before and after World War I. In contrast to the expatriates who spent the 20's advertising their abandonment of social conscience, those intellectuals who remained at home accepted what they conceived to be their social responsibilities. Mumford's muckraking and debunking predecessors in the years between 1910 and 1920 had left his generation the task of supplying an alternative conception of the American past and a more respectable optimism about the present and future. George Santayana and Van Wyck Brooks had exposed the thinness of "genteel," "highbrow" American culture, Thorstein Veblen the pretensions of the upper classes and the universities; H. L. Mencken demolished both stodginess and philistinism. The spirit that was to replace all these derived from a new, more serious view of the American tradition which was to result in Van Wyck Brooks's reinterpretation of the careers of Mark Twain and Henry James, the rediscovery of Emily Dickinson, Herman Melville, and Henry Adams, and Lewis Mumford's own *The Golden Day: A Study in American Experience and Culture* (1926).

The "Golden Day" of the title was the period from 1830 to 1860 in America during which, Mumford believed, a few choice spirits expressed the pure ideals of the culture just prior to its decline. "Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Melville, yes, and Hawthorne [i.e., Hawthorne to a lesser extent] had answered the challenge of American experience." These writers had thrown off the dead hand of the past and rejected the crassness of their own time. In their age, the equivalent of the vulgar business culture of the 1920's had been the "detestable" pioneer spirit. From Mumford's perspective the classic American writers had been rebels much like the leaders of his own intellectual moment. Emerson had rejected the past and replaced it with "a creative barbarism." Even Hawthorne expressed this spirit; despite his own interest in architectural history, Mumford endorsed the prescription of Hawthorne's character in *The House of Seven Gables* who suggests that houses be torn down and rebuilt in each generation.

Ostensibly a literary study, *The*

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Golden Day displayed Mumford's predilection for exhortation at the expense of analysis. After brief sketches, or, more properly, celebrations of the writers he had selected to discuss, Mumford turned to an attack on the shallow, "fragmentary culture" which they had been unable to change. This pointed to the present, a catalogue of the regressive and hopeful tendencies which took up a third of the book. At the end came an exhortation to hope, moral health, and regenerative uplift which was to be repeated in most of Mumford's two-dozen-odd volumes.

In both his literary and architectural writing of the 20's Mumford traced the failures of American culture to the inhumane influence of the machine. In *Sticks and Stones* (1924) his animus was directed at the destructive tendency of modern capitalism which in the form of Civil War militarism had destroyed the Golden Day. By 1931, however, in *The Brown Decades*, a chronicle of American culture from 1865 to 1900, Mumford found in post-Civil War America a kind of Golden Day paralleling the cultural movement which had arisen in his own time of post-World War I boom and bust. The new intellectual climate of the 30's had changed his outlook, and like other aesthetes of the 1920's, Mumford was returning, if not from physical exile like Fitzgerald and Dos Passos, then from a spiritual denigration of contemporary American culture. The products of that culture now appeared most grand when least individualized, and the iron constructions of the post-Civil War period which he had ignored in *Sticks and Stones* had come to embody the "collective achievement" of the skyscraper, which before he had detested. The other arts appeared to be succumbing as well to the "social impulse," notably in what he held to be the most vigorous and hopeful development of the day: mural painting.

WITH *Technics and Civilization*, the first volume of "The Renewal of Life," the theme of the machine moved to the center of Mumford's work. To summarize this book is to set forth very nearly all that may be learned from Mumford, though later works continued to develop new opinions. In a survey of technological developments since the 14th century, *Technics and Civilization* purports to describe "the conquest of Western Civilization by the machine." Employing the broad phases of social development typical of Comte and Spengler, though derived more immediately from Mumford's declared master, the regional planner Patrick Geddes, the work posits three stages of technology: primitive, intermediary, and modern. In the primitive, "eotechnic" Middle Ages the machine benefited man by releasing him from backbreaking labor, while the feudal organization of society prevented the later excesses of rapacious capitalism and preserved the life-giving tradition of handicrafts. During the 18th century, in the "paleotechnic" phase, capitalism ran wild. It destroyed medieval humanism by bringing a "vulgarization" and "quantification of life." Shrewd, calculating "Economic Man" appeared, along with a "landless, traditionless proletariat." Then, late in the 19th century, a "neotechnic" phase began, which brought the promises of "a life-centered economy," a "fresh integration," a new "synthesis," and an "Organic Ideology."

The terms recall *The Golden Day,* which also described the breakdown of what Mumford regarded as a medieval synthesis—early 19th-century American culture—by the machine, and which ended with an equally vague exordium to forge a new culture. Indeed, the pattern is typical of most of Mumford's books (and many of his essays), from his first, *The Story of Utopias*—which tells how the admirable utopias written up until the 17th century in response to "the breakdown of the town economy of the Middle Ages" were succeeded by "industrial utopias no longer concerned with values but with means" and then by signs of renewal pointing to a new future—to his latest, *Interpretations and Forecasts*, the section titles of which describe the same arc: from "New World Horizons," to "Miscarriages of 'Civilization,'" to a closing chapter on "The Flowering of Plants and Men."

In a review of *The Culture of Cities* (1938), the second volume of "The Renewal of Life," Meyer Schapiro, though he did not draw attention to this pattern, dissected with unremitting thoroughness the logical absurdities which arise from such thinking. In this particular book the "Golden Age" was the medieval town, the period of barbarism that of "baroque man" between the 15th and 19th centuries, and the time of renewal the present, which according to Mumford was witnessing the emergence of "organic man." One after another Schapiro exposed Mumford's solecisms: he "psychologize[d] causes and . . . moralize[d] effects," employed an "uncontrolled intuitiveness and merely verbal correlations," adopted Spenglerian "analogical thinking," and a "mysterious animism" in the place of analysis. These tendencies had emerged in *Technics and Civilization*, and would run throughout Mumford's "Renewal of Life" series, providing enough illustrations for a handbook of rhetorical errors.

IN the late 1930's Mumford made an attempt, only partially successful, to resolve a contradiction between his militant opposition to fascism and his implicit aesthetic partiality to a Nazi-like cult of order and heroic sacrifice. In *Technics and Civilization* Mumford had called for the artist's sacrifice of his individualism for the collectivity, and in *The Story of Utopias* he had defended Plato's warrior class, now so suggestive of Hitler's squadrons of putative Nietzschean supermen. As late as 1932, James T. Farrell pointed out, after a trip to Germany Mumford had reported finding a healthy, anti-technological "cult of the sun" which suggested that "at the bottom, in Germany, there is sanity and strength."

Rather than confront these cases directly, however, Mumford undertook to revise just enough to meet the new situation. Accordingly, he effected a kind of Greening of the Crystal Palace. This giant steel and glass hall built for the 1850 British Centennial exposition and imitated three years later in New York "had scarcely anything to contribute to architecture," Mumford had written in 1924. Fourteen years later in *The Culture of Cities* he made it

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the embodiment of organic values, pointing out that its design had been inspired by the greenhouse. What Mumford really meant was that the tired old capitalist civilization had values worth preserving. Shocked by the rise of Nazism, Mumford did what he could to escape from his own affinities to its aesthetic. Triumphantly, Meyer Schapiro showed that Mumford was not really opposing capitalism when he called for his revolution of the spirit. If capitalism "includes both power states and service states," wrote Schapiro, "it becomes right to support one's service state against the enemy's power state." One year later it did become right, for this was 1938. As it developed, with his virtues of goodness, "rampant healthiness," celebration of life, and the rest, Mumford did answer the demands of the great challenge of his time.

And Mumford did face the moral if not the intellectual issues. In 1939 he advocated readiness to fight in *Men Must Act,* and he further defended democracy in *Faith for Living* (1940). In 1940, also, he resigned from the *New Republic* after years of frustration over its unwillingness to support a war against Germany. Though he consistently represented the military in his works as having undermined the medieval synthesis, he supported full mobilization in a letter to the New York *Herald Tribune* in 1944. In 1947 he resigned from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and from the Institute of Arts and Letters in protest against an award to Charles Beard, who had been an isolationist during the war.

During the 1950's Mumford campaigned against the development of atomic energy. He called for a "post-nuclear ideology" which would consist of a cult of healthy love opposed to the dehumanizing forces of this, the latest stage of the machine. He urged scientists to go on strike, praising a microbiologist who had "forsworn her career as a scientist" when she decided that her research into "altering the genes in lower organisms" was "potentially inimical to the human race." *The Pentagon of Power* (1970), a denunciation of Western civilization, completed Mumford's postwar transformation of his god of the machine into a devil.

THROUGHOUT his two dozen or so books, Mumford has devoted himself not so much to performing an analysis of culture as to expressing an attitude toward it, and this attitude has led him to a fundamental error about technology; a force to which he assigns a far greater moral weight than the facts warrant. In *Technics and Civilization* he insisted on regarding the products and consequences of machinery as expressions of man's spirit. At the same time, however, his language expressed a historical determinism guided by an unidentified, mysterious purposiveness. "The machine *came into* our civilization," he wrote, "not *to save* man from the servitude to ignoble forms of work, but *to make more widely possible* the servitude to ignoble standards of consumption that had grown up among the military aristocracies" [italics added]. Or, in another typical expression of mysterious historical causality, "the paleotechnic regime *was preparing for* a series of more lethal wars" [italics added]. Paradoxically, as it develops, in Mumford's animistic conception of reality the machine possesses "cultural values."

On the one hand, the values for which the machine is supposedly responsible were simply Mumford's expression of the aspirations of the 30's. "What remains as the permanent contribution of the machine . . . is the technique of cooperative thought and action," he wrote in *Technics and Civilization,* where by the same logic he was led also to praise the "magnificent" Russian methods of technology. At the same time, he took over from Spengler not only the dramatization of the machine itself, the idea of "Faustian technics," and the conception of a declining civilization, but also anti-rationalist thought. His myth of a golden time under an "organic," uncapitalist, medieval church he shared with the imaginative reactionaries of his day: Henry Adams, T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, to name some of the Americans. And his solutions—salvation by the artist heroically sacrificing himself to the commonalty, a cleanly society devoted to work for the general good—proved more adaptable to totalitarian than democratic states. The mystical spirit in which he had approached technology, society, and the future found its ironic echo in Nazi Germany.

As with his unwanted affinity to totalitarian methods, Mumford's pursuit of the good life in his many essays on architecture and city planning eventually took on a conservative coloring. He championed good design and a slowing of the technological tempo: aims which served the interests of the privileged. That these have also been the causes most recently to have captured the attention and allegiance of large numbers of activists on the Left, who universally regard Mumford with veneration, is perhaps not Mumford's fault—he eschewed the cultural barbarism of the 60's—but it does suggest a shared affinity with reactionary mysticism.

MUMFORD, though he has depended on a few ideas (which is not to say that he has lacked a growing erudition) and a single tone of warning, is a man who has mostly adapted to the changing times, and particularly to the shifts and eddies of "concerned" liberal thought over the past fifty years. He began in 20's-style iconoclasm and hopefulness, and with new concepts like "organism" in place of older "abstractions [such] as . . . the struggle for existence." The heroic artist embodied this outlook, preserving it in good periods and bad by consulting his own conscience exclusively. In the 30's the liberal mind shifted to an ethic of cooperation leading toward a united front against fascism. "Socialize creation," Mumford now wrote. His artist figure's heroism became a matter of sacrificing originality to social utility. In the 40's the call was for mobilization, after which, with victory in the war, "conformity" became the danger. Though Mumford in the 50's did not return to the individualism of the 20's, he did resurrect its ideal of self-expression through healthy release of the libido. In the 60's the social problem appeared to emanate from government; always a regionalist, Mumford returned to decentralism as a rallying point. By

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the 70's the pendulum of popular liberal thought had once again swung away from the individual, as the paramount issue became "the delicate ecological balance on which all life depends."

In the final analysis, Mumford's evolving rhetoric, instead of signaling the imminent apocalypse or the forging of a new spirit, has led in the direction of an acceptance of the world as it is. His diatribes against the machine have had the effect for the reader of domesticating this mysterious force, making it familiar and well-known. Emerson had met a similar fate. His original championing of the individual did not so much point to the overthrow of all tradition and authority as provide an ideal ethic for the period of untrammeled development that was the Gilded Age. In 1968 Mumford revised his elevation in *The Golden Day* of Emerson's "creative barbarism." Instead of a 20's-style iconoclast, Emerson now appeared as a preserver of tradition, Mumford having failed to notice that, like himself, his subject had changed in the course of his career. What remained the same with each was his approach to ideas. Professor John Holloway has characterized figures like Carlyle, Newman, Disraeli, Arnold, and Emerson as "Sages." "Through Carlyle's prose," he writes in *The Victorian Sage*, "the nerve of proof—in the readily understood and familiar sense of straightforward argument—simply cannot be traced." Instead, "exposition . . . becomes proof."

Mumford's books of exhortation perpetuate a tradition which leads back through Emerson to the Puritan sermons of the 17th century—prophecies of doom which invariably ended on a note of reaffirmation of the American destiny. The Golden Age has been lost, the Puritan preacher warned, but it also beckons on the horizon. "Since *The Condition of Man* appeared in 1944," Mumford writes in a new preface this year, "the condition of man has worsened." In true prophetic fashion his book asks: "Has the destruction yet gone far enough to promote a genuine renewal?" In the face of such expression it is perhaps inappropriate to ask just which destruction and which renewal are meant.

Movies

Politics on Film

William S. Pechter

IT IS the climax of *The Day of the Jackal*, and the paid political assassin, code name "Jackal," brilliantly disguised as an elderly, one-legged, French army veteran (not only his hair but his skin artificially aged by chemical discoloration), closes in on his target of General de Gaulle at a populous location where the General is to make a public appearance. With apparently valid documents of identification indicating residence within the barricaded area, the would-be killer has made his way past a guarded barrier. Suddenly, the mild-mannered but brilliant police detective who is the Jackal's adversary gives some indication that lightning has struck (as best he can, having earlier exhausted the gesture of slapping his forehead with the palm of his hand to signal a brainstorm), and runs to the barrier, where the guard then joins him in racing off in a desperate last-minute attempt to prevent the assassination. I would dearly love to know the substance of the detective's illumination, and what he says to the guard; somehow his asking, "Did an elderly, one-legged French army veteran limp by?," the only question I can think of which might lead them so directly to their man, strains credibility even given a detective as brilliant as this one. But on what words are spoken the film maintains a discreet silence. As in what seems to me an increasing number of other such sequences in films in which the writers have apparently been unable to imagine how plausibly to get from one point to the next, the action is photographed in long shot, and we are conveniently prevented by distance from hearing what was said.*

As it happens, this choice bit of wits'-end film direction provides (with the exception of Edward Fox's amusingly suave performance as the Jackal) one of the two things of interest in the film, the other, also noteworthy for what is omitted, coming early on with the kidnapping and murder by torture by representatives of the French government of a French citizen unconvicted of any crime. In view of the fact that the information extracted from the murdered man constitutes the basis for all of the detective's subsequent ratiocinations, one might expect something more than the film's impassive treatment of this episode; indeed, in almost any film less dull and pompous than this one, I would assume the unemphatic treatment to be a calculated indication of either cynicism or veiled comment, rather than the betrayal of moral obtuseness I take it to be here. For what it's worth, as one more such footnote studding film history, *The Day of the Jackal* was made by a director, Fred Zinnemann, usually praised for his "humanist" leanings, whose career had been foundering, and who badly needed the hit this movie has now given him.

THERE is another scene of torture in a recent film, one leaving no question as to how we are to respond to it. *State of Siege*—a thinly fictionalized account, written by Franco Solinas and directed by Costa-Gavras, of the kidnapping

* I've since checked the ending of the novel, in which, with some though not much more plausibility, the detective makes the rounds of every check point, until, at the last, he discovers no one but the cripple has entered the area, and the guard has made a note of his address.

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and murder of Dan Mitrione, an American AID official, by Tupamaro guerrillas in Uruguay—has been condemned for its presentation of a loaded case.* But there is, I think, room for a cinema of political advocacy. The flaw, and, I believe, crucial flaw, of *State of Siege* is not that it's loaded politically, but loaded dramatically. *The Battle of Algiers,* which I think tremendously impressive, was, after all, no less partisan in its presentation of a political case; what gave it that fullness and dramatic excitement which *State of Siege* utterly lacks was its sense not of the clash of equally compelling cases but of equally imagined characters. In *State of Siege,* the repressive Uruguayan police officials are depicted as men totally devoid of ordinary human feeling, but the Tupamaro insurgents are actually themselves no less lifeless in their political virtue and bland decency. And whereas *The Battle of Algiers* didn't shrink from the moral consequences of the actions of the FLN guerrillas, unflinchingly showing us the blood on their hands as well as on those of their French rulers, the Tupamaros in *State of Siege* not only risk their entire operation to speed their kidnapped hostage to a hospital when he's accidentally wounded, but, when they reluctantly "execute" him (the killing done off screen), produce an unblemished corpse which looks as peaceful in death as if only sleeping.

"THE cinema is the most important of all the arts to us," Lenin said, and it's really remarkable, in the light of such a valuation, how little films have yet to realize their potential power to exert political influence on our lives. Has there yet been a film (excluding newsreels and documentaries) comparable in its political impact to a book such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*? Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* comes to mind, but it is a special case, the documentary record of a staged event, and a film which seems furthermore, at least to an English-speaking audience, to be less the expression of a specific politics than, in the hands of perhaps the most abstract of film's masters, some celebration of the very essence of nationalistic fervor. Otherwise, far from having explored the political dimensions of film, we still seem to be searching for models with which to begin. Two Italian films of the early 1960's seemed to point a way: Vittorio De Seta's *Bandits of Orgosolo,* and Francesco Rosi's *Salvatore Giuliano.* But after *Bandits of Orgosolo,* a great, stark, Verga-like narrative of the unbroken cycle of poverty and banditry in Sardinia, De Seta was apparently unable to sustain a career as a theatrical-film director, and none of his few films since has been released in this country. Rosi, on the other hand, continues to pursue, if somewhat less audaciously, the open-ended, dossier style of *Salvatore Giuliano* in his recent *The Mattei Affair.* But intellectually exciting as the example of *Salvatore Giuliano* remains, *The Mattei Affair,* like its predecessor, is a film whose moments, however brilliant, finally amount to less than works that are wholly achieved.

Meanwhile, Godard denounces everything from *The Battle of Algiers* to *Z* as misguided, yet seems himself to be pulling back from the didacticism by which he has alienated most of his audience to something less pure and more accessible (in the process creating, in the long strike sequence which makes up the first part of his recent *Tout Va Bien,* one of his liveliest theatrical spectacles). And Gillo Pontecorvo, the director of *The Battle of Algiers,* also reaches out to a wider audience in *Burn!,* and succeeds only in creating a work much more dogged by the conventional than was its predecessor. While Costa-Gavras moves from *Z* and *The Confession* (both from scripts by Jorge Semprun, who wrote *La Guerre Est Finie*) to a collaboration with Franco Solinas, writer of *The Battle of Algiers,* co-author of *Burn!,* and one of the four people credited with the script of *Salvatore Giuliano.*

What Solinas brings to *State of Siege* is, I think, the episodic structure and the tone of objective inquiry; what Costa-Gavras brings is *Z*'s tendentious melodrama, and incessant movement. The result is really less a collaboration than a draw, neither rousing agitprop nor a dispassionate accumulation of evidence. As things stand, the director's chief concession to the appearance of impartiality has been not so much the characterization of Mitrione (let alone the formulation of any anti-Tupamaro case) as the casting of Yves Montand, the French film's answer to Henry Fonda, in a role in which a Broderick Crawford or Peter Boyle seems called for. Yet though the director has disarmingly stated that his films are intended as preachments to the converted (at one time, it was his intention that *State of Siege* be called *The Amerikan*), his scenarist does seem seriously interested in addressing those other than the totally committed.

Given this stalemate between the intentions of writer and director, about the best which might be hoped for is that *State of Siege* could spur one, through reading, to one's own exploration of the questions it raises—questions about whether Mitrione can be so conclusively linked with the implementation of torture as the film asserts, or about the character and methods of the Tupamaro movement, or whether Uruguay itself, a largely urbanized country with a history of social reform and trade unionism unusual in Latin America, is really only a replica of Brazil. Indeed, watching *State of Siege,* one can occasionally despair entirely of films as vehicles of political issues; aren't these things really better communicated through writing? Perhaps; and yet, given a film such as *Bandits of Orgosolo,* I'd prefer not to leave it at that. Wherever we are to look for guidance, however, I think it's not to the work of Costa-Gavras, films whipped into frenetic movement by a director unable nevertheless to make them live.

NOR are we to look, I think, to the work of Lindsay Anderson. It's not I, or some publicity flack, but Anderson himself who has de-

* An astute inventory of the film's bias has been provided by Andrew Sarris in an excellent piece in the *Village Voice* of April 19, 1973.

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scribed his *O Lucky Man!* as "relevant" and said of it, "If everyone had learned the lessons of *O Lucky Man!*, Watergate couldn't have happened." By this I take it, despite the exhortation (as conveyed by one of the songs in the film) to, "Smile when you're makin' it/Laugh while you're takin' it/Even though you're fakin' it/Nobody's gonna know," that he doesn't simply mean that, were high White House officials and their cohorts to have been more debonair, we might all be none the wiser today. We are meant, of course, to understand that this "wisdom" that is pounded into the head of the film's Candide-like hero as he's buffeted about the world in the course of his picaresque adventures is to be taken ironically. But do we so take it?

"Revolution is the opium of the intellectuals," a graffito proclaims conspicuously in this work by a director whose previous film, *If . . .*, ended with the machine-gunning of representative establishment figures by student rebels. In fact, the hero of *O Lucky Man!* bears the same name as that of *If. . . ,* and is played by the same actor, Malcolm McDowell, though we are told by the director that these coincidences are without significance. And perhaps they are, given the numerous other films that this one vaguely echoes in ways which seem to be neither quite instances of quotation or of imitation.

O Lucky Man! has its origins in an autobiographically-derived story by McDowell: indeed, the film's penultimate sequence has McDowell making a screen test for *If. . . ,* with Lindsay Anderson on camera, and the title *"O Lucky Man!"* marked on a visible clapboard. And Anderson's appearance (he has appeared earlier as well) seems appropriate, given how much the fortunes of star and director have become entwined; one senses that the story of the hero's making it is felt by the director to be no less about himself, and *O LuckyMan!* ends on a scene of a staged cast party for the film with star and director together celebrating their latest success.

Yet if *O Lucky Man!* is a celebration of success, it is of success in a bad world, a world in which, as the sophomoric cynicism of the song lyrics has it, "only wealth will buy you justice," and, "Someone's got to win the human race/If it isn't you, then it has to be me." And, in being a kind of *apologia pro vita sua* for the director, it seems to me very much a work of bad faith, and guilty conscience. To be sure, Anderson doesn't exempt himself from the film's indictment of the world's corruption: he in fact portrays himself much less indulgently than he does his hero, and without the defense of the hero's innocence; indeed, at the conclusion of the film, in which the hero began by conquering with his smile and ends by asking, "What's there to smile about?," it is the director who enjoins his star to keep on smiling by bashing him over the head with the script. And yet for all the self-criticism which the film implies, for all its bitter knowledge about the character of that establishment to which star and director have gained entry, and the certainty that Anderson regards *O Lucky Man!* as a subversive work, it seems to me decidedly half-hearted, and weighed down by a terrible complacency of spirit; for all the willfulness involved, there was something really more likable about the desire of *If . . .* to join the revolution than there is in this film's cynical seeing through the "opium" of such commitments. "If knowledge hangs around your neck like pearls instead of chains/You are a lucky man!," another one of the songs in the film has it. Out of such luck, *O Lucky Man!* has been compounded, but it's just the sort of luck that, as an artist, Anderson doesn't need.

I MUST confess that my first concern on hearing of the accusations of anti-Semitism being made against the film of *Jesus Christ Superstar* was the frivolous one that I would probably end up having to see it. It would be dishonest of me to claim I never go to movies with biased expectations, or that my response to films is unaffected by this. In the case of *Jesus Christ Superstar* (which I didn't know from any of its previous incarnations), I was quite willing to believe the truth of the charges, and thought it hardly even worth dignifying as an irony the fact that, only one film before, with *Fiddler on the Roof*, its director, Norman Jewison (who is not Jewish), had been the Jews' best friend. I first became aware of Jewison before he began making feature films, as the director of the Judy Garland television show, and those films of his I've seen since have brightly displayed his television work's impersonal slickness, and his Garland-nurtured instinct for going for whatever, from laughs to schmaltz, would "work." If there really were anti-Semitic things in this film, it surely would betoken nothing serious; at least, nothing more serious than avarice. All the same commercial spirit in which businessmen sold revolution to the students several seasons back, or white men merchandise kill-whitey fantasies to blacks today.

IN AT LEAST one respect my suspicions about the film proved right on target: it's almost impossible to suggest the imaginative impoverishment, the sheer stupefying banality, of this movie's version of the last days of Christ—the St. Judy Passion—and I don't intend to try. In another respect, however, I underestimated the work: I had expected the alleged anti-Semitism of the film to be no more than the random fallout of its pandering to the anti-establishment sentiments of its audience, to be, in that sense, unintentional. But though the villainy of the Jews "works," all right, so, too, would the villainy of the Romans, who, if anything, could have been a good deal more easily made stand-ins for cops or American imperialists than can the Jewish priesthood be equated with any of the usual *bêtes noires* of the counter-culture. Yet the Romans are so thoroughly exculpated by the film of any responsibility for Christ's crucifixion as to become virtual instruments of the Jewish priests, who bring Jesus to a reluctant Pilate with the demand, "We need him crucified!" And though the Romans are hardly made attractive—Pilate

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portrayed as waspishly epicene, and Herod clownishly camped-up as a Felliniesque faggot—Pilate is at least given an introductory speech in which, reflecting on a dream, he worries about his prospective involvement in Christ's death, and how the future will judge him: "Then I saw thousands of millions/Crying for this man/And then I heard them mentioning my name/And leaving me the blame."

This speech, whatever it may lack in scriptural grounding, is at least consistent with the obsession that almost all the characters at one time or another manifest with respect to their standing with posterity, their image. "I shall be dragged through the slime and the mud," Judas complains of his tarnished reputation. The Apostles sing: "Always hoped that I'd be an Apostle/Knew that I would make it if I tried/Then, when we retire, we can write the Gospel/So they'll still talk about us when we've died." And even Jesus himself, foreseeing his death, inquires of God, "Will I be more noticed than I was before?" and, later, cries out on the cross, "My God, my God, why have you *forgotten* me?"—though possibly this last is less a case of meaningful textual emendation than of simple indifference to meaning, as is, presumably, Christ's elsewhere wanting to know that he won't "be *killed* in vain."

In fact, I'd be tempted to say that this preoccupation with public relations is the *only* thing which gives any thematic consistency to the work. For the rest, though Judas starts by raising some pseudo-serious objections to Christ's billing ("You've begun to matter more than the things you say"), which, being in line with the work's title, were perhaps pursued in earlier versions, this is quickly seen to amount to nothing. Despite such indications of apostasy, he sings, "I really didn't come here of my own accord" when he fingers Jesus to the priests, although the betrayal, however welcomed by them, was unsolicited. And though the priests begin by expressing some valid concerns that Jesus's prominence may bring the wrath of the Romans down on the Jewish people, they end up virtually barking orders to a Pilate who describes Jesus as an "innocent puppet." The mob, too, is changeable, in the traditions of the villagers in Frankenstein movies and pop-music audiences, moving unpredictably from being fans to clamoring for Christ's death. It's hardly any wonder that this Jesus seems chiefly bewildered by it all.

But there is one thing more in which the film also maintains a stubborn consistency, and that is its anti-Semitism: having this film in general release is a bit like having a performance of a with-it version of the Oberammergau Passion Play down every block. Though it's hard to believe the work's portrayal of Jesus, cast in the effete plaster-saint mold of previous Hollywood Jesuses hitherto brought to its highest degree of perfection by Jeffrey Hunter, could fail to give offense to any Christian audience, I think one must distinguish here between trivialization or vulgarization and active animus. Not only is all culpability in Christ's death passed on to a malignant Jewish priesthood and bloodthirsty Jewish mob; the priests are also portrayed in a way that is clearly indebted to classically vilifying stereotypes. Presiding over a temple pictured as a veritable Forty-second Street of tawdry amusements, Caiaphas, the prime mover against Jesus among the priests, sings in a grating, guttural bass voice, while his sidekick, Annas, affects a high-pitched nasal whine rather like that of Avon Long playing Sportin' Life in *Porgy and Bess*. Judas, who is depicted as the tool of Jewish interests, is played by a black actor, and images of his being menaced by tanks and jet fighters, though not out of keeping with the movie's other deliberate anachronisms, cannot fail to suggest the notion of Third-World victimization by the warlike might of Israel (where the film was shot).*

Tim Rice, the librettist, has steadfastly denied allegations of anti-Semitism made against *Jesus Christ Superstar*, pointing to his subsequent work (*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*) as having a "pro-Jewish" attitude, and containing a song anticipating the State of Israel as the promised land. (Probably we can look forward to Norman Jewison's film of this as well, provided only that it works.) Actually, I'm quite willing to believe that *Jesus Christ Superstar* was created by people who sincerely believe themselves to be free of any animus toward the Jews; in some ways, this makes only more disturbing the fact that the film is shot through with anti-Semitic feeling. Doubtless conceived in a spirit of unalloyed commerce, the work, like most other books, records, plays, and movies, clearly has as its muse the jackass. But the jackal's mark is unmistakably on it.

* This observation is also made by Gerald S. Strober in his report on the film (published by the American Jewish Committee) to which I am, at several points, indebted.

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Books in Review

Winning Elections

THE FUTURE WHILE IT HAPPENED. By SAMUEL LUBELL. *Norton. 162 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by ELLIOTT ABRAMS

According to Samuel Lubell, who has been doing polling and interviewing for decades, "the scope and intensity of discontent in the country was astonishing" in the autumn of 1972. "Yet," he goes on, "it was just this sheer profusion of dissatisfaction that was to overwhelm the Democrats. . . . Instead of uniting their angers, the uneven, erratic recovery and persistent inflation were forcing each individual to scramble for his own interest, pushing off what burdens he could onto someone else." Whenever Democratic politicians spoke of government programs which might alleviate economic or social problems, they alienated some among their potential supporters. Given the terrible economic pressure on most wage-earners, "Every use of government became a tax issue"; and some uses of government, such as welfare, were particularly galling to most voters. It is not that the voters were becoming ideological conservatives, Lubell concludes: "We misjudge the public temper if such reactions are regarded as evidence of anti-government philosophy. The voters were not opposing the use of government on their own behalf, they were objecting to welfare recipients' getting benefits free that taxpayers had to pay for." The government programs supported by Democrats were seen not as solutions to the nation's, or the voter's, economic and social problems, but as more giveaways to the poor at a time when the hard-pressed working and middle classes wanted relief from high taxes and growing inflation.

Nor is this phenomenon to be a temporary one, in Lubell's view. The New-Deal coalition is now dead. The disappearance of the "Solid South" made it imperative that the Democrats win the great industrial states, but the mechanization of Southern agriculture has sent to many Northern and Western cities millions of whites whose views on social issues are closer to those of George Wallace than to those of George McGovern. In Lubell's scenario, then, the Democrats lose the South yet cannot win the North and West because they are unable to deal with the many and varied discontents which move working- and middle-class urban and suburban voters.

Lubell is not the first man to sketch out such a scenario for future Republican victories. In fact, his prognosis and that of Kevin Phillips in *The Emerging Republican Majority* are almost identical. For example, both agree that Wallaceism is a temporary phenomenon, leading people whom Lubell calls "Southern workers in transition" away from past Democratic loyalties and toward Republicanism. On the question of where the battleground will be in future Presidential elections, furthermore, there is a striking agreement not only between Lubell and Phillips, but between these two authors and Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg in *The Real Majority*. Scammon and Wattenberg speak of "Quadcali" (California plus the states within the Massachusetts-Washington, D.C.-Illinois-Wisconsin quadrangle) as the states the Democrats must win if they are to gain victories while losing the South; Phillips grants some of the Quadcali states to the Democrats and singles out California, Pennsylvania, and Ohio as swing areas; and Lubell's Southern workers now living up North may well be, as he supposes, the swing voters in all the Quadcali states except those in the New York-New England area.

The analyses made by Lubell, Phillips, and Scammon and Wattenberg are, then, quite similar, and their views of where the swing votes lie are nearly identical. They differ, however, on the ultimate question: Which party will win in future Presidential elections? Lubell believes that discontent and economic insecurity lead not to a return to the "Working Man's Party," but rather to an "every man for himself" outlook much attracted by President Nixon's "Individualism and the Work Ethic" speeches. And to Lubell this is inevitable. Explaining why "the Democrats were unable to benefit from the many voter discontents against Nixon," he announces his "net conclusion that the sense of self-interest in the country had become so fragmented that it probably was impossible to develop any single 'program'—that term so beloved by Democrats—to deal with these many conflicts."

Lubell is probably correct that economic and social issues are intertwined, and that economic issues do not always help the Democrats as Scammon and Wattenberg believe. His insight that government programs may be seen as tax issues, and therefore opposed on both social and economic grounds, is extremely valuable. He points out that Nixon's rhetoric about the "Work Ethic" somehow appeared to many voters to mean more money in their pockets, while Democratic programs ostensibly aimed at aiding the Middle American appeared (or were distorted into appearing) to be giveaways which took money from the working man and gave it to the poor. But Lubell never explains why he assumes the economic issue can no longer work for the Democrats. Why, for example, would a program stressing tax reform and reduction of unemploy-

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Proceedings of a symposium on
The Impact of Science on Society,
organized by
The European Committee of The Weizmann Institute of Science,
Rehovot, Israel, held in Brussels, June 28-29, 1971

Scientists in Search of Their Conscience

Edited by
Anthony R. Michaelis and Hugh Harvey

With contributions by
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Scientists from varied disciplines and many countries explored in depth the dilemma facing them. The dilemma is the responsibility of scientists for society's use of scientific findings. Though no hard and fast conclusions were reached, the discussions left no doubt that scientists were becoming aware that they can no longer claim that the pursuit of knowledge is divorced from its use. Yet should they begin to face the responsibility for the application of their work, it is clear that their freedom would be impaired. The loss of freedom is of course part of the dilemma of science.

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ment not fill the bill? Why could not such an economic program persuade these voters (who, Lubell admits, do not hold an anti-government philosophy) that the actions proposed would help *them* as well as the poor or the black?

A similar question could be asked about Lubell's analysis of the 1972 campaign. The Nixon campaign, Lubell writes, became a "psychological contest . . . between the Presidency and a troubled electorate" in which Americans were led to vote not only against the other candidate, but against other Americans. "Nixon did not create these divisions," Lubell admits, "but he did make them the terrain of political battle. In doing so, he seems to have structured them into continuing social conflicts. . . ." These "continuing social conflicts" are precisely those which Lubell feels will prevent the Democrats from winning back their disaffected former supporters. Yet as Lubell's own research makes clear, if there is one thing the disaffected Democrats of the Northern and Western cities have *not* become, it is Republicans. Their loyalty to the Democratic party may be seriously weakened, but it has certainly not been replaced by a warm feeling for Nixon and the Republicans; Lubell's quotations from his interviews prove nothing if not precisely this. His description of the traditional Democratic electorate in 1972 as deeply divided, insecure, and substantially alienated by the party's candidate and campaign seems accurate, but he gives little evidence that another Democrat in another year could not successfully appeal, along traditional economic lines, to the millions of Democrats who reluctantly chose Nixon over their party's nominee.

In his analysis of the 1972 campaign as the first "total election," Lubell has much to say about the steady drift of power to the White House. It is a commonplace that this has happened with respect to foreign policy, but Lubell points out—what is perhaps more important to the average American—that it has happened with respect to the economy as well. The acceptance of Keynesian theories calling for governmental intervention in the economy in order to manage demand has led, Lubell remarks, to greater Presidential power over, and a resulting politicization of, economic policy. While applauding the theoretical insights of Keynesian economics, Lubell is certainly correct to wonder if its political effects are equally beneficial.

Lubell ties in with this the weakening of both major parties to the point where, in 1972, the party organizations were charged with little more than nominating the candidate, who then ran his own independent campaign operation. Once again, he points out, the net result is a shift of power to the White House. The White House staff, without significant checks or balances from Congress, the Cabinet, or even the national Republican party, was left in direct and total control over foreign policy, economic policy, and the Presidential campaign. Lubell notes that the staff tends to get the latter two mixed up at times, but he thinks it is a mistake to keep harping on the venality of some of the President's assistants. The key point is that the power was accumulating in the White House for them to grab, and future Watergates will therefore not be avoided merely by a more careful choice of personnel but only if the concentration of power is halted, and, indeed, reversed.

Lubell's comments on White House power are compelling, and in these chapters of his book, as well as in those devoted to his always fascinating analysis of how the electorate sees itself and its problems, he seems most persuasive. It is his argument that Democratic politicians will be permanently unable to respond to those problems that is open to question. Like Kevin Phillips, Lubell foresees dark days for the Democrats, but like Phillips's book, Lubell's is ultimately more informative than convincing. Most Democrats are likely to stick with Scammon and Wattenberg, not merely because they are bearers of good tidings, but also because their analysis reflects the view that Democratic politicians are an ambitious crew, anxious to learn the lessons of past defeats and move on to future victories.

Jews under Islam

A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza. Volume II: The Community. By S. D. Goitein. *University of California Press. 633 pp. $20.00.*

Reviewed by Erich Isaac

The entire field of Arabic and Islamic studies is studded with ironies. To begin with, there is the fact that the science was pioneered by Occidental Jewish scholars who, until recently, very nearly dominated the field; one of the mainsprings of their interest was the myth of a medieval "Golden Age" of Muslim-Jewish coexistence and mutual fructification (a myth not quite shared by Jews who had actually lived under Islam). A further irony stems from the fact that the Jewish manuscripts preserved in the Cairo "Geniza"—a storage room for discarded documents unearthed in the late 19th century in a synagogue in Old Cairo—should have become the most significant source for the general study of Islamic civilization in Mediterranean lands, as well as the most important source for our linguistic knowledge of medieval Arabic. A final irony, and surely not the least, is the recent appearance of the monumental researches of S. D. Goitein, formerly director of the School of Oriental Studies at the Hebrew University, on the Jewish communities of the Arab world, based on his study of the Geniza documents, precisely at a time when Jewish life in these lands has drawn to a bitter close.

Ultimately, Goitein's work comes to us because of the traditional Jewish belief that Hebrew, as the language of revelation, must be treated with reverence. By a process of religious infection, this attitude also encompassed Jewish writings in whatever language—Greek, Aramaic, Spanish, Arabic, German, etc.—so long as their script was in Hebrew (a common practice). The belief that script in and of

Erich Isaac *is professor of geography at the City College of New York.*

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Recent Books in Economics

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Kazushi Ohkawa and Henry Rosovsky. This study, which emphasizes the dramatic postwar growth of the Japanese economy, attempts to fit Japan's experience into a historical growth model of the type familiar to economists. The authors establish the basic pattern of Japan's 20th-century growth and consider individual aspects of this expansion in detail. $15.00

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Leo A. Orleans. "An excellent synthesis of what is known and what is unknown about the economic and social characteristics of China's population. . . . The professional will find it an excellent reference work and the general reader will find it a well-written, easy to comprehend introduction."—*Perspective.* $8.50

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Atencingo

The Politics of Agrarian Struggle in a Mexican Ejido

David Ronfeldt. This is a detailed study of the ejido of Atencingo, one of the largest and most productive agricultural cooperatives in Mexico. The author focuses on a long series of struggles among peasants, powerful economic interests, and state and federal government officials for control of the ejido's valuable lands and production. $10.00

Stanford University Press

itself is sacred is also to be found among Muslims and medieval Christians, but nowhere was this carried to such lengths as among Jews, who would not destroy a single document, no matter how secular the contents, if it were written in Hebrew letters. Such documents, of the most various sort, were consigned to a Geniza, and when the room became overcrowded, its accumulated deposits were given burial, with the same respect as that shown toward a deceased human life. Fortunately, the Geniza of the Palestinian synagogue of Old Cairo (Fustat) escaped this fate and continued to function until well into the 19th century, when travelers, scholars, clerics, and assorted collectors became aware of its existence and began to raid its contents. The greatest credit for salvaging this treasure trove belongs to Solomon Schechter, who in 1896 induced the authorities at Cambridge University, where he was then teaching, to acquire the entire store of Geniza documents before they were further dispersed. It was a scholarly coup of the first order and, as a result, Cambridge today possesses an enormous hoard of Geniza manuscripts, at least three times the size of all other collections combined. (The other Geniza materials are to be found in collections in Leningrad, Budapest, Philadelphia, New York, Washington, Oxford, Paris, and Jerusalem, to name only the most important centers.)

Professor Goitein's work has involved the prodigious task of examining all extant Geniza papers. It is his distinctive contribution to have recognized that the Geniza's nonliterary materials, from shipping bills to court records to shopping lists, constitute a veritable gold mine for scholars. For over three decades he has worked to shape these materials, to offer an entirely new and comprehensive perspective on a unique section of the medieval world. Thus far his efforts have produced two volumes in a projected series which, when completed, will surely stand among the major historical accomplishments of the century.

In the present volume, Professor Goitein offers as complete a picture as possible of Jewish com-

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munal life in the Arab High Middle Ages (ca. 969-1250), a period of great Jewish flowering. Whereas the first volume dealt with economic matters, the succeeding work focuses on communal institutions, ramifications of the social structure, and the relationship between communal autonomy and external social control. It opens, fittingly, with a detailed description of the civic form of communal organization which imparted to Jewish (and Christian) communities of the 10th through 13th centuries a strength greater than that of the amorphous Muslim masses among whom they lived. Goitein's account indirectly supports what other writers have occasionally observed about Islam in other places and at other times, namely, the overall weakness and incoherence of its civic institutions. The essentially religious democracy of the Jews, reinforced by Greek and Roman corporate forms adopted in pre-Islamic times and by the special status afforded minorities under Islam, extended beyond the territorial jurisdictions of local rulers, constituting a distinct, though not entirely autonomous, social and political system. (To what extent there may have been institutional borrowings from the Muslim middle classes cannot as yet be determined.) Goitein's wide-ranging discussion here includes such topics as the distribution of authority between the Jewish ecumenical leaders (the Gaon, Head of the Academies, and the Exilarch, Head of the Dispersion) and the local powers; the development of different rites and legal usages which, unlike those of the churches, were not based on dogmatic schism; and the interaction of Rabbinic Judaism with such sects as the Karaites and the Samaritans.

The existence of centers of religious and legal authority in more than one place throughout the far-flung Diaspora gave rise, as Professor Goitein shows, to complications which were sometimes resolved by a derivation of authority from them all. Thus the local authorities in communities made up of members originating from several countries were able to devise formulas whose powers were asserted to derive from the Jewish authorities in the home countries. (For instance, in 1132, a Jewish court in Mangalore on the Malabar coast of India issued a bill of manumission to a local girl in the name of both the Exilarch of Baghdad and the Palestinian Gaon who at the time resided in Cairo.) This practice helped forestall local dissent, although I suspect that a certain geo-psychological process was also at work: it is common for exiled or emigré communities, living together in areas distant from their points of origin, to play down their differences and fuse their common interests. It is for this reason, no doubt, that in Yemen, "from Aden in the south to Sa'da in the north, public prayers used to be said over the Exilarch of Baghdad and Gaon Masliah of Cairo." On the other hand, as Professor Goitein has ample opportunity to demonstrate, where local factionalism developed, the home authorities did not hesitate to come to the support of the respective quarreling parties.

Professor Goitein is also able to clarify much of the historical confusion surrounding our knowledge of the functions of such high offices as *Nagid* (Prince of the Diaspora) and *Ra'is al Yahud* (Head of the Jews). In addition, he establishes a convincing rank-classification of communities and draws up a surprisingly detailed description of even minor centers. The nature of the Geniza records is such that, given Goitein's painstaking attentions, even the social services provided by the communities in question can be reconstructed in minute detail. These encompass, as might be expected, the provision of food, shelter, medical care, and clothing for the needy, and support for the education of orphans and the children of the poor. Beyond that, the documents reveal the vagaries of Jewish life—the swelling of the relief rolls by European survivors of the Crusader massacres, special assistance given to high-born European proselytes, aid to the needy to pay the onerous poll tax imposed by the Muslim rulers. Moreover, there were the nearly continuous and pressing demands for the ransoming of captives, to

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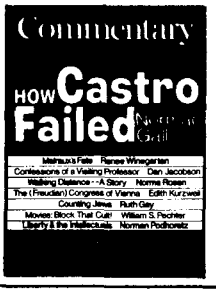

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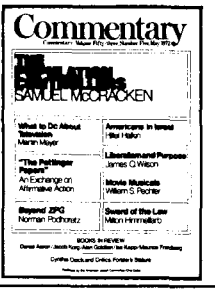

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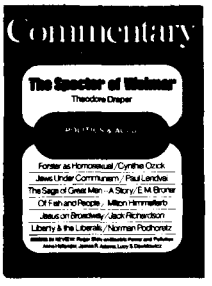

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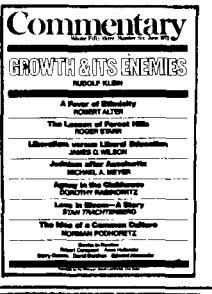

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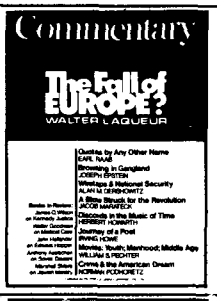

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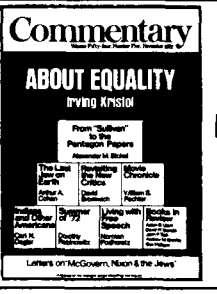

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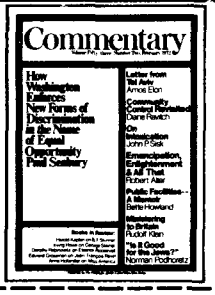

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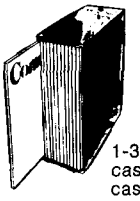

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say nothing of the extraordinary efforts called forth by such major disasters as Bedouin, Seljuk, or Crusader depradations in Palestine. The experience of modern Jewish charities—that small communities contribute in greater proportion than do large centers—may have its medieval parallels. Professor Goitein cites a statement from a small Egyptian Delta town where eighteen persons raised a very considerable sum and "extracted strength from weakness and joined Israel in its tribulation despite . . . our poverty and indigence."

Professor Goitein's account also includes a systematic discussion of the synagogue, ranging from its architecture to its function in communal life. He describes the various levels of education and gives an astoundingly complete picture of individual professions, supplemented as always by his sophisticated perception of the materials. But perhaps his most important sections are those dealing with interdenominational relationships, specifically Jewish-Muslim relations at both the communal and government levels. Cooperation did indeed exist; nonetheless, Jews also suffered from the overall discrimination practiced by Islam against all non-Muslims and sporadically from a specifically anti-Jewish "anti-Semitism." (Goitein, incidentally, argues that the latter term is both useful and legitimate in describing Islamic anti-Jewish animus and behavior. He effectively disposes of the modern anti-Jewish Arab apologists who contend that Arabs cannot be anti-Semitic since they, too, are Semites.) For all that, conversion to Judaism occurred among Muslims (as also among Byzantine and Western Christians) who found havens in Jewish communities. But coexistence had its price, and there were converts out of Judaism as well, including some who became leading Islamic thinkers, and others (like Isaac b. Abraham Ibn Ezra, son of a great Jewish author and son-in-law of Judah Halevi) who later returned to Judaism.

READING Professor Goitein's fascinating recounting, one comes away with the overall impression that the Jewish experience under

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Islam was most evidently successful in the cultural and social spheres. For instance, major institutions, like the yeshiva, which were essentially indigenous and bore no resemblance to their Islamic counterparts, were permitted to develop in their own natural way. Islamic influences were felt most strongly in the legal and economic areas, but here the interaction was complex and difficult to determine. Where the pressures were clearly perceived they were often successfully deflected, even when they came with all the force of a despotic and arbitrary officialdom. Through Professor Goitein's exceedingly thorough assimilation and presentation of all the relevant material there emerges a solid portrait of how these tendencies and counter-tendencies affected the religious, social, and economic lives of Jews at an important period in their long and variegated history.

Fiction Roundup

STATE OF GRACE. By JOY WILLIAMS. *Doubleday. 260 pp. $6.95.*

THE SUMMER BEFORE THE DARK. By DORIS LESSING. *Knopf. 273 pp. $6.95.*

THE HOTHOUSE BY THE EAST RIVER. By MURIEL SPARK. *Viking. 146 pp. $5.95.*

THE BLACK PRINCE. By IRIS MURDOCH. *Viking. 366 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID BROMWICH

JOY WILLIAMS's *State of Grace* comes with the imprimatur of the Paris Review Editions and carries fine promotion from George Plimpton and a number of equally prominent friends of writing. Let me confess to some astonishment. For Joy Williams is pouring forth a tepid Creative Writing ooze which has become stock in trade at the universities, and which is strictly a habit of the permanently would-be novelist. Here are a few of her more wonderfully worked-over set pieces: "Almost all arms and noons and lips and anger are the same and love." "I don't look at all pregnant and never would have thought it of myself, but I've been told firmly that it's so. I peed into a paper cup and now I know." "I live by the airport, what is this that hits my house, that showers my roof on takeoff? We can hear it. What crap is this, I demand to know." These are taken from the first ten pages of Miss Williams's book. Somewhere further on a male character will be heard telling the heroine, "Well, kiss my coccyx." And in a metaphor that deliberately mixes the organs of speech and sex, Miss Williams has gone well beyond John Updike at his coyest:

> I want to have him love me. The fact that he does already troubles both of us. I prop the pillow behind my back and begin a conversation. The room is close. I've spilled some scent and it's in the carpet. I open my lips and the words enter my furred mouth.

Miss Williams has not understood that whatever tries to be prose-poetry ends up with the worst of both worlds, and is at once ersatz prose and ersatz poetry.

The heroine of this novel is Kate —I almost said Kate Williams. But, though there are touches that look autobiographical, one cannot be sure. The novel brings Kate from her pregnancy to the birth of her child, with generous flashbacks to her religious childhood and her early free-living and free-loving adulthood. I will only say that as far as one can separate style from content, the first-person protagonist from the author who watches over her, Kate appears to share certain characteristics with her creator. She is self-indulgent and not obviously intelligent, and she stands in a passive relation to her experience. Just so does Miss Williams answer to the muse of an impersonal and artificially heightened style. When the author gets down to earthly affairs and listens to a secondary character, she simply does not hear the way he would sound. But then, as a backwoods type in her novel most ungracefully avers, "That's something which ain't easy at all!" Since there is no movement from Kate the child to the Kate who can have a child, the desert spaces of

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DAVID BROMWICH *is a young critic whose reviews and articles appear regularly in* COMMENTARY, Dissent, *and the New York* Times Book Review.

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plot demand no summary. Though the religious episodes may have been deeply felt by the author, again one cannot be sure. "The Reverend is talking about the grave, how deep and insatiable it is, just like the barren womb. It's never satisfied, he is saying." Yes, thank you, we caught "insatiable" the first time around but are glad nevertheless to learn that Miss Williams knows what it means. Leaving aside the stylistic density, however, even the conceit which it supports is silly. In what sense is a grave or a barren womb insatiable? Like many of Miss Williams's metaphors, this one gives the impression of being old and sick with use and, at the same time, bad in a new way. Actually, the off-realism of this book—the air of disbelief—is less than calculated. The author just has not taught herself to write continuous prose. Of course, the worst feature of such a performance is that it holds the world of experience not too close up but too far away. Most sins are pardonable in a first novel, but perhaps not all. We cease to be concerned whether or not Miss Williams is true to herself, her manner in reaching the goal is so patently false.

TO IMPLY Doris Lessing was in the least part false would be actionable. And quite properly: the terms of praise that are commonly applied to her writing, like "conscientious," "scrupulous," "ambitious," amount to a single very high compliment which she has worked hard to deserve. About modern life generally, and about the historical and political issues that make its sleep restless, she is never anything but right-minded. Sometimes painfully so: it is so much easier to love humanity than to like one's neighbor, yet Mrs. Lessing, who is a good and honest lover of humanity, behaves decently also toward those impossible nasty specifics. One recalls, in *The Golden Notebook*, the steady stream of supplicants who come to bed down with the heroine, boors in varying degrees, and the rigid charity that guides each evaluation as she dismisses them into her notebooks. Kate Brown of *The Summer Before the Dark* is a different sort of heroine, not really an intellectual and in no sense the author's mouthpiece; but her stance toward a lumpish American lover is notable for the same warmth, sympathy, humor, and exasperation made good by self-criticism. Thus Mrs. Lessing's virtues and those of the women she writes about. Yet, with all of her humanly desirable traits, she seems to me a somewhat overrated novelist.

Spiritually, Mrs. Lessing belongs to the school of D. H. Lawrence, and in her case all too clearly spirit is style. She agrees with Lawrence in being a great hater, indeed much of her strongest writing is in this vein. A highly effective passage in *The Summer Before the Dark* describes the life-cycle of the American airline stewardess:

> They offer drinks. They lay before you, with tenderness and intimate smiles, trays of packaged meals. They send loving messages through the intercom: "We love you, we need you, please come again, please love us." And they walk up and down, up and down, smiling, smiling, being admired by men and by women. Their business is to be admired. As they move about displaying themselves, the fever rises. At the beginning of the flight a girl is fresh and radiant with general friendliness, but soon she seems ready to explode with the forces of attention she has absorbed. She is blown up with it; she probably has a temperature—she certainly looks as if she has, with flushed cheeks and glazed excited eyes.
>
> And she smiles. She smiles. She smiles.
>
> One can imagine that when she gets back to her room after a flight she is restless, can't sit down, can't sleep, can't stop smiling, can't eat. She is too stimulated, she can't switch herself off. If she has a man, what can that poor nothing's love be compared to what she has been receiving from dozens of men all day. And imagine what happens when this victim marries! Which of course is bound to happen very soon: the marriage rate is high in the profession, like the divorce rate.

Notice all the repetitions: that, too, is just like Lawrence. The emphasis in such writing is bound to be on feeling, but at this very dear cost: there is not much seeing. To hold with the emphasis is to believe that art, far from being reflective, ought to be all immersion. For Mrs. Lessing the price is certainly right, since she is constitutionally unable to be selective about detail. Perhaps a just and faintly damning praise of her work would be that reading it is often like reading medium-bad Lawrence. The work flows, it keeps your attention, but the effects are diffuse. We are not licensed to set these writers in opposition, but, even going by the limited rules of his own later fiction we may note that Lawrence has an unfair advantage over his disciple. For he is an inveterate and unreserved hater, whereas Mrs. Lessing sometimes feels obliged to pull back. Understanding all and forgiving all: yet the kindness of the philosophic heart can grow, on this see-saw, a little insufferable, so that we long for the cruel novelistic head.

Kate Brown is a middle-aged housewife whose main worries have always centered on the caretaking of her family's London house. She has several nearly grow-up children and a loving but unfaithful husband. Mrs. Lessing's novel follows Kate through a single manic and despairing summer, with a love affair in Spain and then a long convalescence (from sickness, the affair, and, no doubt, life) in London. After this summer will come the falling away into a sterile and sexless, a resigned and unrebellious middle age. Or so Mrs. Lessing might dub it; she likes to pound things home. *The Summer Before the Dark* has a large ideological element, from which it frees itself, at odd intervals, just when the atmosphere seems thickest, but to which it finally succumbs. Probably Mrs. Lessing surprised even herself with the plain-as-your-nose ironies of her conclusion, where Kate meets up with a wild young thing named Maureen. They share a flat and have talks; Maureen, we are given to see, faces the choice Kate once had. And she is going to knuckle under in the end, she too is headed for disaster, though for the moment she despises Kate's unfreedom.

Because she is a rather careless writer—and she may be correct in thinking that revision would strangulate her special vitality—Mrs. Lessing needs a good deal of roomy

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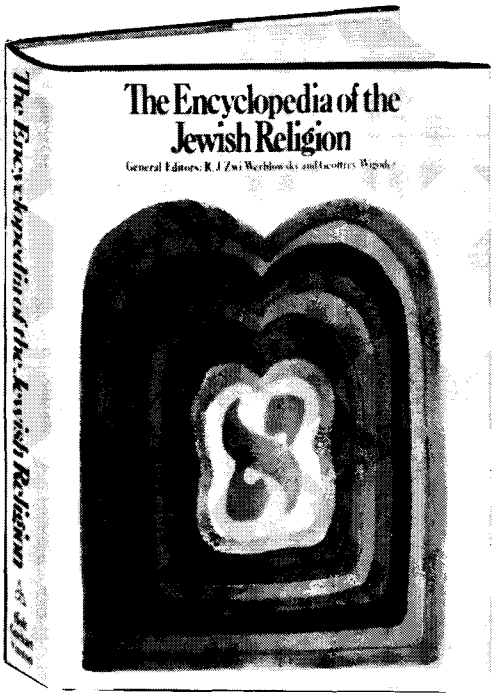
Did you know that the Bar Mitzvah ceremony is unknown in the Bible and Talmud? (see page 57) That Judaism frowns on celibacy? (see page 81) That the mystical Kabbalah has doctrines in common with Hinduism? (see page 389)



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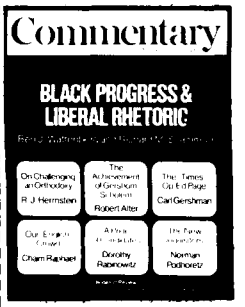

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indeterminacy to work out the destinies of her characters. Kate is simply too tight: like the author, yet too unlike. Hence the occasional eeriness, despite this writer's very great wealth of incidental material. It is as if the minor characters were moving about, disembodied, in the ether of Kate's mind. They are disabled for the most ordinary activities. They cannot talk straight. A youthful prig, in Kate's eyes one of the new breed of fascists, says: "Yes, I am not ashamed to say it, it is decency we want, we have had enough of muck for muck's sake, we need standards now." When Kate reacts to some experience by summoning a cliché, Mrs. Lessing feels duty-bound to report it, as with the "suave impersonal Organization" which Kate works for and resents. It is too bad. Up to now woodenness has been the last thing one expected from Mrs. Lessing. But I ought to add, in mitigation, that there are admirably vivid passages throughout the first two-thirds of the book. True, the writing can get too breathlessly quick for its own good: "The fact that this super-polite American had let her carry heavy suitcases and had not even noticed it said everything about his state." But such lapses are rare enough, and the critics who have complained about them are in a peculiar state of mind, if they can do so while admitting Mrs. Lessing as an international artist of the first rank. Technically, *The Summer Before the Dark* is not beneath her usual level.

MURIEL SPARK is a fabulist. Her American publisher has offered a comparison with Kafka and, though this is surely to mistake her weight, I can recognize it as a noble try. To Kafka, our subjectivity was desolating, it made us blind and literally subject to everything outside ourselves. Mrs. Spark prefers to see the catastrophe from the point of view of the fates, who are after all having a pleasant time. Mrs. Spark has been accused of heartlessness toward her characters, but I would diagnose the situation this way: while she knows that the people in her stories are in the very nature of things pitiable, she refuses to pity them. That would be claiming too much for herself.

A British couple living in New York, Paul and Elsa, are the exotic flowers that inhabit *The Hothouse by the East River*. Their marriage is in trouble, Paul cannot decide what is the matter with Elsa. Her shadow points in the wrong direction; or rather, it maintains a steady direction even as the sun moves. Partly, it is an instance of emotional resistance materializing, of a deep-buried malaise suddenly assuming its allegorical shape. All of which, abstractly, Paul can accept. But why? It transpires that Elsa once had, or very likely had, an affair with a German prisoner of war named Helmut Kiel. Paul and Elsa had been helping with radio propaganda, broadcast by the prisoners for the British, and Kiel happened to be a second available man. But now, we discover, Kiel has turned up in a shoe store in New York. Elsa promptly leaves for Munich with him. Yet how can it be Kiel, whom the records list as having died years ago? No matter; in the end Paul and Elsa, who are reunited, race around some New York City streets to avoid their old British friends, but they are caught at last; an expensive car pulls up to the curb alongside them, opens its doors, and relieves these insomniac souls. Everybody in the car, including Paul and Elsa, has been dead since the end of the war.

Paul and Elsa have needed to share their worst family secret before they could rest in peace. In the meantime Mrs. Spark plays a few of her characteristic games, and delightfully. Paul's psychoanalyst follows Elsa around the city in the role of private detective. Elsa's psychoanalyst, blessed with the name Garven Bey, takes over as family servant. Possibly it is a new turn on the well-worn game of Compton-Burnett, though, for that matter, much of the present-tense pseudo-objective writing reads like a parody of the French New Novel. At all events, there is an undiminished supply of the happily surrealistic knick-knacks that give Mrs. Spark her distinction.The family daughter, Katerina, addressing a note to her mother, "Mrs. Paul Hazlett, H.C.F."—for Highest Common Factor. Mysterious messages written on the soles of shoes. And then that shadow. At one point Garven, who has been the first to see it, gazes at the entire scene before him and silently forms the word "sick." This is how Mrs. Spark keeps her excruciation beneath the surface; in fact, she most resembles Kafka in the austerity of her method. For my part, I am better able to appreciate the jagged strokes of wit when they are softened by nostalgia or romance, as in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* and *The Girls of Slender Means*. Yet it has to be said that Mrs. Spark, whatever she does from one book to the next, remains an indispensable writer. One feels the world would be visibly a poorer place without her.

INDISPENSABILITY, it may be, is what Iris Murdoch has failed once too often to achieve. I can think of no other reason for the strange antagonism her work has met with in certain quarters. The consensus is that she diverts but does not satisfy. Still, why ask for more? The difficulty, one will be told, is that Miss Murdoch appears to hold out more. I should think a compromise might be arranged on the following terms: Miss Murdoch writes philosophical conversations and casts them in the form of novels. In a novel by Miss Murdoch I generally find that intellectual curiosity, together with a susceptibility to her skill in the melodramatic arts, compels me to read on. One must allow for certain conventions, such as the pages of straight dialogue, the picking away at motives, the transparent cunning of the narrative: yet these are fair enough. For those who can stay with the conventions, *The Black Prince* will look like Miss Murdoch at the very top of her manner.

The Black Prince is narrated by a writer, Bradley Pearson, whose beliefs about the nature of art put one in mind of Miss Murdoch's. His best self, like hers, is ascetic; only for him the asceticism verges on criminal mania. Having published two dignified but unsuccessful novels and followed them with years of dedicated silence, he is just getting ready for his masterpiece when he falls in love with the barely post-adolescent daughter of a rival novelist. So he writes his masterpiece about the love affair, which in its ramifications includes

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an abortive involvement with the rival's wife, the suicide of his own sister, and the death by murder of his rival, Arnold Baffin. In the telling it is Baffin, uncomprehending and jealous, who breaks up the affair, and Mrs. Baffin who murders her husband after a suspected infidelity. Much of the novel's fascination comes from the conflict between the two men, who are in life as in art. Baffin is a sleazy and too-prolific author (but not without an elemental talent: the reader, if he wants, may think of Lawrence Durrell). May not Pearson have been jealous of his facility? In any case Pearson, whom we know to be subtly mad, goes to jail for the murder and there writes his masterpiece, *The Black Prince*. How far can he be trusted in accounting for himself? Miss Murdoch frames the novel with an editorial foreword and afterword by an artistically inclined felon who became Pearson's best friend before his death, and with four appendices presented as letters from participants in the story. By their style shall ye judge them. And, on the whole, Pearson and his friend emerge victorious. As it sorts out, as we match one version of the events with another, it is Pearson who seems virtually if not actually truthful.

A providential fiction, Pearson's novel says, a great work of art, is that which may be virtually and yet not actually true. Or is it Miss Murdoch's novel that says this? Pearson, one observes, is after a more severe objectification. When his lover-to-be, Julian Baffin, asks what books she ought to read, he pooh-poohs the easy modern stuff, *Sons and Lovers* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, and unhesitatingly settles on *The Iliad, The Odyssey, The Divine Comedy*. If Shakespeare made this group it would have to be with *King Lear*, for in the highest art we do not identify with the hero. But in a queer moment, Pearson contradicts himself and expounds a theory of *Hamlet* which inverts Eliot's cavil about the missing "objective correlative"—on the contrary, Shakespeare knew exactly what he was doing.

> "*Hamlet* is a wild act of audacity, a self-purging, a complete self-castigation in the presence of the god. Is Shakespeare a masochist? Of course. He is the king of masochists, his writing thrills with that secret. But because his god is a real god and not an *eidolon* of private fantasy, and because love has here invented language as if for the first time, he can change pain into poetry and orgasms into pure thought—"
>
> "Bradley, wait, please, do stop, I'm not understanding you—"
>
> "Shakespeare here makes the crisis of his own identity into the very central stuff of his art. He transmutes his private obsessions into a rhetoric so public that it can be mumbled by any child. He enacts the purification of speech, and yet also this is something comic, a sort of trick, like a huge pun, like a long almost pointless joke. Shakespeare cries out in agony, he writhes, he dances, he laughs, he shrieks, and he makes us laugh and shriek ourselves out of hell. Being is acting. We are tissues and tissues of different *personae* and yet we are nothing at all. What redeems us is that speech is ultimately divine. What part does every actor want to play? Hamlet."

Great art must be calm—but adventurous; detached—but minutely attentive. These really are Miss Murdoch's views, and it is on the strength of them that she tries to salvage Pearson's novel. On his own reckoning Pearson is a failure because he is a liar. Where art, as Miss Murdoch noted in a different context, must invigorate without consoling, Pearson in his own fictional practice needs the consolation too: that he should be guiltless and loved. However, the Murdoch *Black Prince* saves the Pearson from its inconsistencies. Pearson, without meaning to, has produced a self-exposure very like the *Hamlet* he casually sketched. His narrowness and solipsism, his treachery, even his love of boys' books, help toward the final result. I have seen this Chinese-box experiment performed before, by Nabokov and others, but never with an outcome as complexly imaginative as Miss Murdoch's, and through it all she sustains her sobriety.

That we sense her larger presence always at hand, calm and scrutinizing, even with the lunatic artifices of this format, may be thought a sign of her virtuosity. For me there is more to it than

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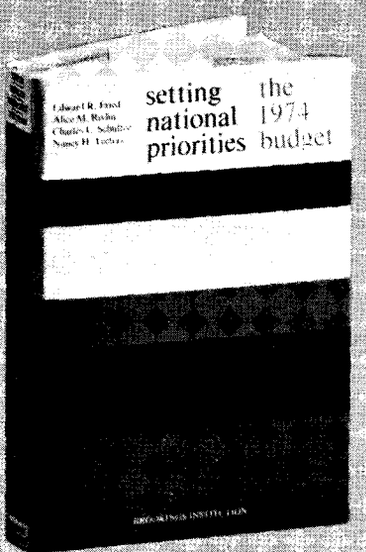

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that. The evenness of tone that has marked her fiction over the past twenty years is reviving, as if it were the staple of life in the novel: and of course it is. Maybe what bothers me about an author like Mrs. Lessing is precisely the harried sound of her prose, an air buzzing with the self-important need to utter truths that will be delivered up right away to the life beyond art. We have to remind ourselves that fiction serves fact best when it looks after its own. These novels have been influenced by the easy modern stuff, Mrs. Lessing's most overtly but the other three just as surely in the formal sense. But now that the techniques of modernism have become merely a set of tricks, or tics, we are no longer required to pay attention to them. We come back to the personality of the writer who either can or cannot tell us something interesting about human life, arouse our curiosity, and make us wise.

Creating Autonomous Man

WITHOUT GUILT AND JUSTICE: FROM DECIDOPHOBIA TO AUTONOMY. By WALTER KAUFMANN. *Wyden. 274 pp. $7.95.*

Reviewed by
WERNER J. DANNHAUSER

WHAT we need, according to Walter Kaufmann, is a new morality, and in his most ambitious book to date he sets out to provide us with one. That is clearly a demanding task, especially since some of us are not convinced there is anything wrong with the old morality. But one does well to keep such doubts in check until one has granted careful consideration to Kaufmann's argument, if only because of the great reputation he commands as a thinker and a teacher of philosophy. The argument, then, runs roughly as follows:

Things are in a bad way today, men being neither happy nor good. The reason is that conformity rather than autonomy holds sway everywhere. Men fear autonomy

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so much that they invent numerous strategies to avoid making decisions. Kaufmann analyzes ten such ploys of "decidophobia," ranging from religion to marriage. At the same time, however, men also crave autonomy, and to help them achieve it, Kaufmann launches a fierce attack on what he identifies as the two main barriers to human freedom: the idea of justice and the emotion of guilt. Justice is a "decrepit idea" and is condemned in both its retributive and distributive aspects, for "the good and evil men receive cannot be said to be deserved." As for guilt, it benefits neither the person who feels it nor mankind at large; nothing good comes of it.

The great destruction of traditional morality having been accomplished, Kaufmann turns to his positive teaching. The old integrity, connected with the idea of wholeness, is replaced by the new integrity, to which honesty is central. The four old cardinal virtues are superseded by a new set of the author's very own design. Justice is obviously out, moderation and wisdom are dropped without ado or discussion, and only courage survives from former times. And to honesty and courage two new virtues are added: love and something called "humbition," a fusion of humility and ambition.

Will the autonomous man, armed with such virtues and making critical decisions according to "the canon" (more or less the scientific method), be happy? Not necessarily. It is part of the charm of autonomy that it involves pain and is "forged in hell." Yet nothing guarantees happiness, and "creative autonomy" is at least likely to be the object of everyone's desire.

KAUFMANN'S zest for polemics is renowned and is very much in evidence here—attacks on other thinkers being necessary in a book such as this, which must show that there are errors about ethics to be rectified. But Kaufmann's record in combat is uneven. He has no trouble scoring points against lesser thinkers like Herbert Marcuse, Charles Reich, and John Rawls, but when he takes on Marx or Plato, Kaufmann is not impressive, and he can be misleading. For example, imputing to Marx the error that "alienation is a function of capitalism," he seems unaware that a passage in Marx which he himself quotes actually makes alienation a function of the division of labor.

As to Kaufmann's scattered remarks about Plato, a thinker of greater stature than Marx, they are most charitably dismissed as inadequate. Such charity is not always easy to muster, mainly because Kaufmann seems to work on the assumption that he is the equal (at least) of even the greatest philosophers. While not totally devoid of insights into Plato's thought —at moments he even seems to realize that one could do worse than approach an understanding of justice by pondering such Platonic-Socratic paradoxes as the assertion that virtue is knowledge or the hints that true justice is ultimately indistinguishable from wisdom—most of the time Kaufmann comes to Plato not to learn but to argue. For he seems to feel that there is nothing good to learn from Plato, the author of *the* book on justice in the Western philosophical tradition.

Kaufmann's treatment of Plato leads one to entertain only the lowest expectations of his own assault on justice, and such expectations are not disappointed. Instead of a sustained attack one finds a rather disjointed foray. The arguments are too many, too shallow, and too lacking in integration to carry conviction. Frequently he suggests that justice in the sense of "stable and precise norms" does not exist, but in other passages he merely maintains that it cannot be defined—though he also defines the just as the proportionate when it suits his purposes. He argues that reason is not up to understanding justice, but this line of argument depends on an impoverished and denuded conception of reason. One could also quote him as an exponent of the view that justice is unattainable, or that it is complicated, as if there were an abundance of books maintaining that it was simple.

Kaufmann fares no better in attempting to do away with guilt. Truly to understand guilt is truly to understand the human soul.

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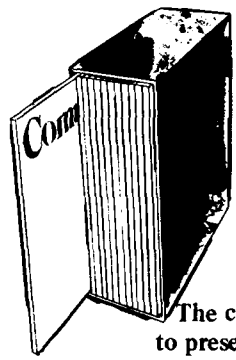

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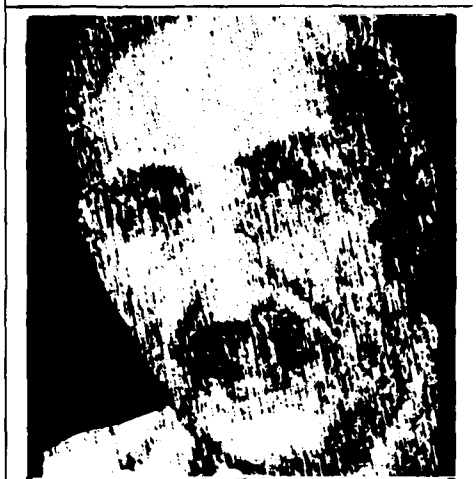

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Kaufmann is arrogant enough to charge thinkers of the stature of Kant and Hegel with employing "unexamined assumptions about human nature" and then himself employing, with scarcely any examination, various Freudian assumptions. He can even declare that "next to nothing was known about fear until Freud made a beginning with the study of unusual phobias." One is tempted to retort that he himself has "next to nothing" to add to anybody's understanding of guilt. Instead he plays with words. For example, he must admit that people who do a great wrong ought to feel something, but the difference between the guilt he condemns and the "keen regret" he condones is by no means clear. And one hardly knows how to react when he recommends that an accused person in court should not be asked whether he is guilty or not guilty, but "whether he admits having broken the law."

KAUFMANN'S stance is that of a man magisterially attempting to reconcile things irreconcilable, to stand between—and above—such opposing views as the philosophies of Wittgenstein and Sartre. But his own advocacy of "creative autonomy" raises some very serious questions. First, one must ask whether the advocate of autonomy is himself the possessor of a liberated mind. The answer is no. Kaufmann rails against dogmatism, but dogmatically claims that God is dead, that there are no opposites in nature, that the world is capricious and cruel, etc., etc.

Secondly, one must ask whether autonomy understood as the willingness or eagerness to make fateful decisions will not bring about a shortage of fateful decisions. I am tempted to coin the word "decidophilia," but I will let it go by attesting personally to the fact that whole months pass when nothing important happens to me. How, then, can I be autonomous?

Thirdly, as to the creative side of "creative autonomy," one must question Kaufmann's insistence on a continuum between the creativity of a little girl playing with dolls and the creativity of Shakespeare. Even if it could be proved that the difference is only one of quantity, one would have to contend with what both Plato and Marx understood very well: at some point differences of quantity become differences of quality.

None of this is meant to suggest that there is nothing of worth in *Without Guilt and Justice*. Everything Walter Kaufmann writes has value and this book abounds in excellent insights into the follies of extreme egalitarianism, the thoughtless rejection of alienation, and much more. Unfortunately, however, the excellence of individual passages is not enough to redeem what is on the whole a barren and pretentious book.

American Sculptor

DAVID SMITH BY DAVID SMITH. Edited by CLEVE GRAY. *Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 176 pp. (paper). $9.95.*

DAVID SMITH. Edited by GARNETT MCCOY. *Praeger. 231 pp. $13.50.*

TERMINAL IRON WORKS: THE SCULPTURE OF DAVID SMITH. By ROSALIND E. KRAUSS. *MIT. 200 pp. $15.00.*

Reviewed by EMMIE DONADIO

NO FIGURE in the history of American art in this century has acquired greater stature than the sculptor David Smith. A pioneer in the fabrication of welded metal sculpture, Smith produced nearly seven hundred works between 1933 and his death in the crash of his pick-up truck in 1965. Reflecting a marriage of the intellectual seductiveness of European modernism and the stubborn American virtues of individualism and hard work his *oeuvre* is an undeniably vital and original accomplishment. The sculptures of the 50's, monumental anthropomorphic personages called "Agricolas," "Tanktotems," and "Sentinels," and the elegant geometric abstractions of the 60's, the "Cubis," are better and more widely known than

EMMIE DONADIO, *here making her first appearance in* COMMENTARY, *has contributed reviews and criticism to* Arts *magazine and was until recently assistant to the curator of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden of the Smithsonian Institution.*

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Smith's early works, but it is in these, his works of the 30's and 40's, that he adapted the formal syntax of Cubism, Surrealism, and Constructivism to his own knowledge of the materials and techniques of modern industry.

Combining the Cubist practice of incorporating real objects in a highly-structured picture plane with the Surrealist-inspired subject matter of the subconscious, Smith made abstract collages that got thicker and heavier, until he was making relief sculpture. Soon he was welding together ratchet wheels, chain-saw blades, and dismantled parts of farm implements in rather menacing puppetlike personalities with names like "Agricola Head," "Saw Head," and "Chain Head" in honor of the tools incorporated in them. After a trip to Europe in the mid-30's he made a series of "Medals for Dishonor," ironic variations on a theme in which he depicted his own pacifist vision of the horrors of war. By the 40's, however, the iconography of his large sculpture had turned to avowedly bellicose and aggressive subjects ("The Rape," "Atrocity," "Spectre Riding the Golden Ass"), and he was also working an eight-hour night shift welding tanks and locomotives in the war effort. When the war was over he worked on three-dimensional linear "drawings" in steel, some of them intended to depict human beings, and others conceived as landscapes more ornamental and decorative than his works of the preceding years.

The formal syntax of Smith's sculpture was always as advanced and authoritative as the technical knowledge of arc welding, the tensile strength of materials, and the uses of chemical sealants and color bonds that he brought to it. His art matured at a time when the possibilities for using industrial materials for sculpture were new and exciting; an article he wrote outlining the range and versatility of the newer alloys and bonding techniques appeared as early as 1940 in the *Architectural Record*. Unlike Claes Oldenburg's giant Lipstick monument (a phallus at home now on the Yale campus) and the self-destructing sculptural machines of Jean Tinguely (one of which expired in a New York museum in 1960)—works which lampoon and caricature the iconography of power and the products of industrialization—Smith's works are a paean to what is now popularly termed the military-industrial complex. He grew up in it: although he had studied painting at the Art Students League of New York in the late 20's, and with his friends Arshile Gorky, Stuart Davis, and Willem de Kooning had kept up with the latest developments of the School of Paris, Smith's art is unthinkable without the apprenticeship he underwent in 1924 as a riveter on the frame assembly line of the Studebaker factory in South Bend, Indiana.

It was in illustrations in *Cahiers d'Art* in mid-1932 that Smith first saw the welded steel constructions of Picasso and Julio González, and it was to these and his own reading of Freud and James Joyce that he later attributed his modernism. But his modernist sympathies were essentially a matter of educated or acquired taste, and they were always tempered by a strictly traditional Protestant upbringing, one that preached the moral obligation of hard work. Even though his first welded sculptures reflect his knowledge of González and Picasso, there is a wide breach that separates the content of the European and the American works. While the ideology of the Paris School promoted works expressive of a kind of effortless ease, subterranean free association, and natural wit, Smith contended with a Calvinist conscience that made him skeptical of anything that appeared too easy or spontaneous. And since he believed that conflict was essential to the production of great art, he cultivated the discrepancies in his own character and experience that he knew would produce the most strenuous tensions. He was an artist who felt obliged to consider himself a worker, and from the recent publications of his writings one has the impression that unlike those artists for whom art is a joyful celebration of themselves, or even a liberating necessity (one can't help thinking of Picasso in this way), for Smith to accept the demands of his calling amounted to nothing short of a penance.

The son of a telephone technician and a Methodist schoolteacher, Smith was born in a small Indiana town that his grandfather had helped to found. Like most of the other men in Paulding, Ohio, where he grew up, Smith's father was an amateur inventor (one of his projects was an electrical slot machine that rejected slugs), and Smith later recalled as many as fifteen model cars in progress in Paulding in his youth. An early test model airplane made there, the "Vin Fizz," later found its way into the Smithsonian Institution. His childhood entertainments had been taking telephones apart to get at the magnets inside and playing in the town railroad yard, where he hopped on board moving box cars and locomotives. Smith himself contributed at least one legend to the folklore of his own artistic beginnings: punished by his mother for some unspecified childhood mischief, he was tied to a tree for an afternoon, and within a few minutes he had modeled a lion from the mud at his feet. This king of beasts, a powerful symbol of his self-assertion, he later recalled as his first sculpture.

In addition to setting off dynamite in the fields around town, some adolescent horseplay for which he was also punished is suggestive of much that is essential to the iconography of Smith's later work: one Halloween he fired the Civil War cannon in the Paulding town square. One has only to look at the early drawings from his notebooks (many of them showing cannon and women "in forced conjunction" as Garnett McCoy has phrased it), and the titles and themes of his works of the 40's to see just how telling this adolescent prank may be regarded. (In her monograph on Smith's sculpture, Rosalind Krauss considers cannon, along with "The Totem" and "The Sacrifice," a major theme of Smith's work.) In his adult life Smith collected cannon, and these took their place on his farm in Bolton Landing alongside the productions of his own imagination that surrounded the property—some like instruments of aggression, others (and by far the majority in his later works) like wary guardian presences. One might say, in fact,

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that implements with the potential for aggression, whether spears, hooks, or the saw-tooth edges of rakes, constitute a large percentage of the "found objects" that Smith worked into his steel constructions. And since the pieces themselves have often been linked to semaphores, if not more humanoid watchful presences, the central theme of Smith's production might be defined by the alternately aggressive and protective impulses that he transformed into menacing abstractions.

Smith himself had no illusions about the nature of his imagery, or the sources of his strength. He regarded metal, the material he chose to work with, as "of this century . . . of power, structure, movement, progress, suspension, destruction, brutality," and his works testify to his love of powerful machinery and strong materials, just as they hold in check, in their tight formal order, the energy spent in their creation. Invited to participate in the Spoleto Festival of Two Worlds in 1962, Smith worked in an abandoned steel factory in Voltri and succeeded in augmenting his reputation as a modern-day Olympian by completing twenty-six sculptures in the space of one month: "And Vulcan came to Voltri. . . ," one critic observed.

THE suggestion of the similarity between his own activity and that of a worker in a munitions or an automotive factory is made again and again in Smith's writings. Borrowing not only the techniques of assembly-line production, Smith stuck to a regular schedule of shifts and breaks in the conduct of his daily life. The name of his farm and workshop (which he refused to call a studio), Terminal Iron Works, came from the name of the machine shop on the Brooklyn waterfront where in 1933 he first worked on his welded steel constructions. His goals he identified with those of the managers of production: "My aim in material function is the same as in locomotive building: to arrive at a given functional form in the most efficient manner." He later compared his craftsmanship (favorably) with that of the automotive industry. To his painted works, which were made of steel and raw iron, he added fifteen coats of epoxy primer before the coats of zinc that preceded a layer of white enamel paint, and all of this was completed before he laid on the final coats of auto enamel of the designated color of the piece. "So it runs about 25 or 30 coats and that's about 3 times the paint coat on a Mercedes or about 30 times the paint coat on a Ford or Chevrolet."

Although he aimed to make sculpture as efficiently as General Motors made the Chevrolet, his activity was distinguished in one crucial respect from that of commercial industry. The profit motive was vexed. Smith was exceedingly careful not to gauge the effectiveness of his enterprise by the popularity, availability, and salability of the product, and in some way he must have wanted his works to remain inaccessible. Considering art a luxury, he spared no expense for materials and kept pace with the latest technological advances in labor-saving devices and processes, but he insisted on turning out the most beautiful up-to-date products of industrial technology in editions of one, and in shapes and forms of high fashion that, in his Calvinist conscience, he must have regarded at least in some respect as useless. Unlike Henry Ford, the last thing in the world he would have wished was that every man have a Smith.

While Smith approached technical matters professionally, like a man confident of his expertise, he came to his art with the desperate trepidation of a combatant, and his sense of his own identity rested on his ability to withstand the pressures in this arena. Smith considered himself not only an expert craftsman but also a master artist, and the work of an artist in his view was nothing less than the ongoing creation of an identity. So important to him was the establishment of identity that his first lesson to prospective artists took the form of a rhetorical question about the seriousness of their intent: "Do you make art your life, that which always comes first and occupies every moment, the last problem before you sleep and the first awakening vision?" His own answer to this question was clear: "I never intend a day to pass without asserting my identity: my work records my existence."

FROM the time of his first one-man show in New York in 1938 to the time of his death, Smith received a lot of critical attention, and in addition to the article on the modern techniques and materials available to sculptors mentioned above, his own writings include an essay on the Spanish sculptor Julio González (published in *Art News* in 1956), several interviews, and many speeches that he was invited to deliver publicly at museums and universities around the country. All of the papers that he kept, including his speeches, letters, poetry, notebooks, scrapbooks, industrial trade-order catalogues, and over three thousand photographs of his own work, have been deposited by his estate in the Archives of American Art, in Washington, D.C. The estate retains the rights to all of this material and with its permission three book-length offspring have so far been produced from it: *Terminal Iron Works*, a critical study of the sculpture by Rosalind E. Krauss, and two editions of Smith's own writings, one selected by Cleve Gray, an artist and friend of Smith, and the other by Garnett McCoy, Deputy Director-Archivist of the Archives of American Art.

Gray's book, *David Smith by David Smith*, originally published in 1968 and recently reissued in an amazingly expensive paperback edition, wants to be a cross between a little red book of the artist's aphorisms and the intimate journals of Charles Baudelaire. But the pretentiousness and size of the package are at odds with the spirit of the text: the tenor of Smith's writing is anything but epigrammatic. Furthermore, the writings are constantly being upstaged in this edition by the generous use of Smith's own photographs. A more serious weakness in the text is that the statements quoted are presented outside any identifiable context. Although they are organized thematically, they have been cut from much fuller passages (in speeches, letters, poems, and unpublished notes), and these have been indicated in footnotes at the back of the book only with respect to the

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reel of microfilm on which they appear in the archive. Hence the quotations—with some exceptions—are unidentified as well as undated, and the reader infers, erroneously, that Smith kept a journal for his most vivid, pithy verbal expressions.

Gray does, however, include a brief autobiography written by Smith in the early 50's, as well as poems, private complaints, and personal observations not published anywhere else, and these do offer an intimate though unfinished portrait of the artist. The photographs of Smith in his workshops in Brooklyn and Bolton Landing at various points in his career, and the use of his own photographs (showing from what point of view and in what kind of detail his works were to be viewed) provide further compensation for this kind of pseudo-literary montage.

The deficiencies of Gray's selection of Smith's writings are the assets of McCoy's, a scrupulously well-annotated edition of Smith's papers, including formal writings, speeches, notes, interviews, and letters, all published in their entirety. Three short articles about Smith's work have also been included, and although one wonders how they may have been chosen, the piece by Elizabeth McCausland published in 1940 in the Springfield (Mass.), *Republican* remains a genuine contribution to our understanding of the artist.

While a private glimpse of Smith is offered by Gray, it is the public figure who emerges from McCoy's text. Here we learn, for instance, that some of Smith's most important pronouncements—on artistic identity, tradition, and the artist's relation to his public—were made in speeches on public occasions. It is clear from these writings that Smith took very seriously his public role as a spokesman for artists, and even conceived of himself in some way as their public defender. He insisted again and again that only artists could understand art, because "a work of art is produced by an expert [and] there must be expertness in its perception," and he spoke often, and at great length, about the impossibility of explaining his art verbally: "As far as I'm concerned, after I've made the work, I've said everything I can say."

In the introduction to his book McCoy has presented an admirable biography of Smith, one based on a judicious and sympathetic interpretation of the material he had at his disposal. There are also photographs of some of Smith's sculptures here, but more important are the few but well chosen pages that have been reproduced from his notebooks. These show preliminary sketches for his works and, of greater interest, the newspaper and magazine illustrations that were often the source of these abstract configurations. A bibliography of Smith's published writings, as well as a selected list of criticism of his work, in addition to the index, all serve to make this collection the most valuable single source of information on Smith yet available; the only imaginable omission is a list of the exhibitions of his work.

SINCE by his own avowal, Smith's works were his identity, one would hope that a careful critical study of them would yield a fair and accurate picture of their creator. Smith himself, in prescribing the terms for such an effort, indicated the difficulty its author would face: "Honest rationalizing of just one work might take years [and amount to] a complete psychoanalysis of the artist's life, a historical analysis of his art (viz. the history of man), his physical condition, his knowledge of techniques and influences directed by his materials, all his fears, his visions. . . . The result might be a twenty-volume case history of just this one picture—and it is doubtful whether this case history would help in understanding the art. . . ." Though he no doubt intended by this challenge to dissuade the contenders, Rosalind E. Krauss offers her psychoanalysis of the artist in one single volume, along with an aesthetic interpretation of his art, a discussion of his techniques and materials, and an analysis of the themes she sees as central to his production. And although there are flaws in her "case history" of Smith, she does help us in understanding his art.

Unfortunately, however, what is valuable in her study is buried in a mass of idiosyncratic comparisons and a limited, eccentric view of the history of sculpture. Despite her introductory remarks, in which she quotes able historical analyses of Smith's sculpture while decrying what she takes to be their underestimation of his unique and original powers, Mrs. Krauss is herself bound to argue for the historical significance of Smith's *oeuvre*. And since she refuses to acknowledge the necessity of historical objectivity which is demanded by such a task, and instead prefers to write her assessment of the artist's place in her own art-historical hierachy, her study is unnecessarily limited. While she creates a clear sense of the monumental intractability, the reluctance and anger that Smith transformed into solid steel artistic statements, she whittles away the magnitude of his accomplishment by comparing his sculpture throughout to the works of artists with far less ambitious intentions.

One cannot help wishing that instead of this psychoanalytic foray into art Mrs. Krauss had written a straightforward biography of the artist, one in which his own statements would be considered as much a mark of his identity as the sculptures themselves. His own pronouncements, far from being "evasive" and "misleading," as Mrs. Krauss would have us believe, have a consistent integrity and persuasiveness, and as primary source material they should have the serious consideration of any writer interested in delineating the course of Smith's artistic intentions. If his works were scrutinized by a critic with Mrs. Krauss's knowledge of Smith himself, as well as a machinist's knowledge of his tools and techniques, it might be possible to write that crucial chapter in the history of the art of this century—the one about its silence in the matter of its own destructive urges.

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